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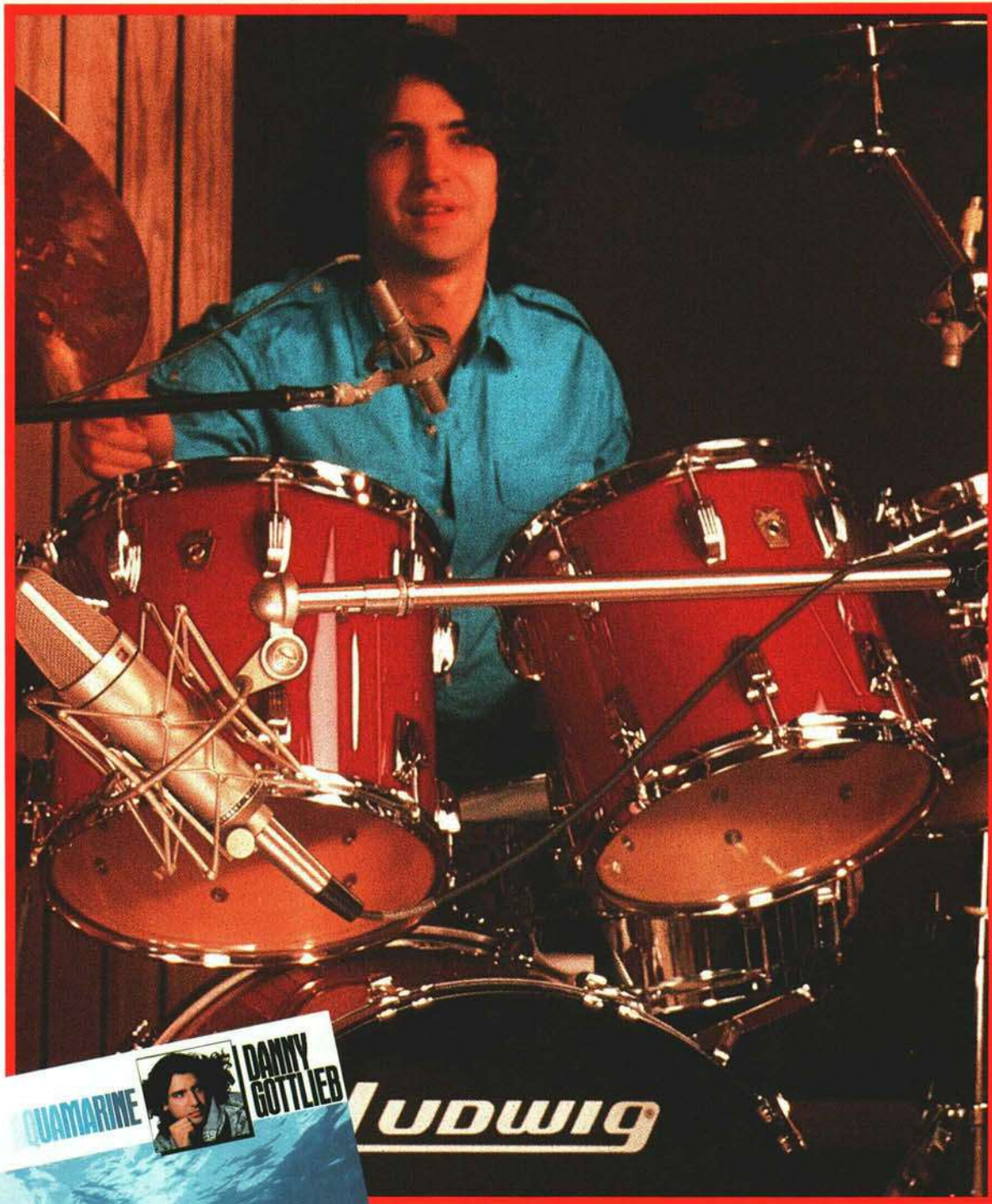
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DANNY GOTTLIEB

Known for his ability to fit into a variety of musical situations, Danny Gottlieb recently faced a challenge when it came to selecting music for his first solo album that would truly represent him. He discusses his playing on that album, and how it reflects his work with such artists as John McLaughlin, Gil Evans, and Pat Metheny.

by Rick Mattingly 16

ALAN CHILDS

First coming to national attention with Julian Lennon, Alan Childs recently did David Bowie's *Glass Spider* tour while on a break from the Lennon gig. Here, Alan discusses how his English-influenced style has paid off with his various English employers.

by Robyn Flans 22

THE DOWNTOWN DOZEN

Although the term "downtown" originally referred to the lower parts of Manhattan, the music that started coming from there in the late '70s has spread well beyond New York City. We look at several of the leading drummers of this music, including David Moss, David Linton, Samm Bennett, and Charles K. Noyes.

by Bill Milkowski 26

DRUMMERS COLLECTIVE ROUNDTABLE

Having recently celebrated its tenth anniversary, Drummers Collective has established itself as a unique "vocational school" for drummers. In this roundtable discussion, directors Rob Wallis and Paul Siegel, and teachers Mike Clark, Hank Jaramillo, Frank Malabe, and Rod Morgenstein (among others) discuss teaching in general and Drummers Collective in particular.

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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW



Here's To The Ladies

Back in the early days of *MD*, we began using a small group of female free-lance writers. I can distinctly recall some individuals taking exception to that decision. Readers—and even some artists—made comments like, "Why are you people using women writers? What do they know about drumming?" Well, not surprisingly, we don't hear comments of that nature anymore. We've continued to assign articles to an assortment of ladies over the years, and they've proven themselves quite capable in the drumming area and certainly worthy of the task. Let me introduce you to a few of them.

Regular readers of *MD* will surely be familiar with the work of Robyn Flans. She has been free-lancing for us since her first interview with Chicago's Danny Seraphine, which appeared in the December '78 issue. Robyn holds the distinction of having written more feature articles for *Modern Drummer* than any other single individual. She's been a delight to work with over the years, and we're all quite proud of her.

Susan Alexander is based on the West Coast and has also been with *MD* for quite some time, beginning with her Phil Collins story in 1979. Sue is still quite active, most recently with her fine articles on The Grove School and P.I.T. in California.

Readers might also recognize the name of Connie Fisher. Working out of the New York area, Connie's projects have included interviews with Tommy Price, Bernard Purdie, Larry Mullen, Jr., and Manu Katche.

We also have several females who like to specialize in certain areas of drumming. For example, Teri Saccone enjoys working with the hard rock-

ers like Rick Allen, AJ. Pero, Bobby Chouinard, and Blair Cunningham, among others. Katherine Alleyne, who's married to drummer Archie Alleyne, lives in Toronto and leans more towards jazzers like Joe LaBarbera and Dottie Dodgion. And some of our specialty material, like *A Different View* with bassist Will Lee and *MD's* story on child drummers, has been aptly handled by Brooke Sheffield Comer, who also writes for *Mix Magazine*.

Three of our writers, who've done most of their work for *Modern Percussionist*, come from strong performance backgrounds. Lauren Vogel, who's penned *MP* cover stories on Doug Howard and The Star Of Indiana, is a busy free-lance percussionist in Dallas. New York City is home for Jany Sabins, an accomplished vibist who has contributed to *MP* with her Keiko Abe and Mike Mainieri interviews. And then there's Karen Ervin Pershing, who was the subject of an *MP* feature article herself prior to her writing activities for us. Karen has had a distinguished career as a classical percussionist in the L.A. area for many years.

Happily, the trend continues. Stephanie Bennett is somewhat of a newcomer to *MD* with her two-part series on Christian drummers, which was well-received. And Deborah Frost, a former drummer who has written for *People* and *Rolling Stone*, brought us the recently published Lars Ulrich story. You should be hearing a lot more from both of these fine writers in the future.

So there you have it: an outstanding representation of some talented ladies who've been doing a great job for *MD*. We're hopeful you agree. Our thanks and congratulations to each of them.

RS

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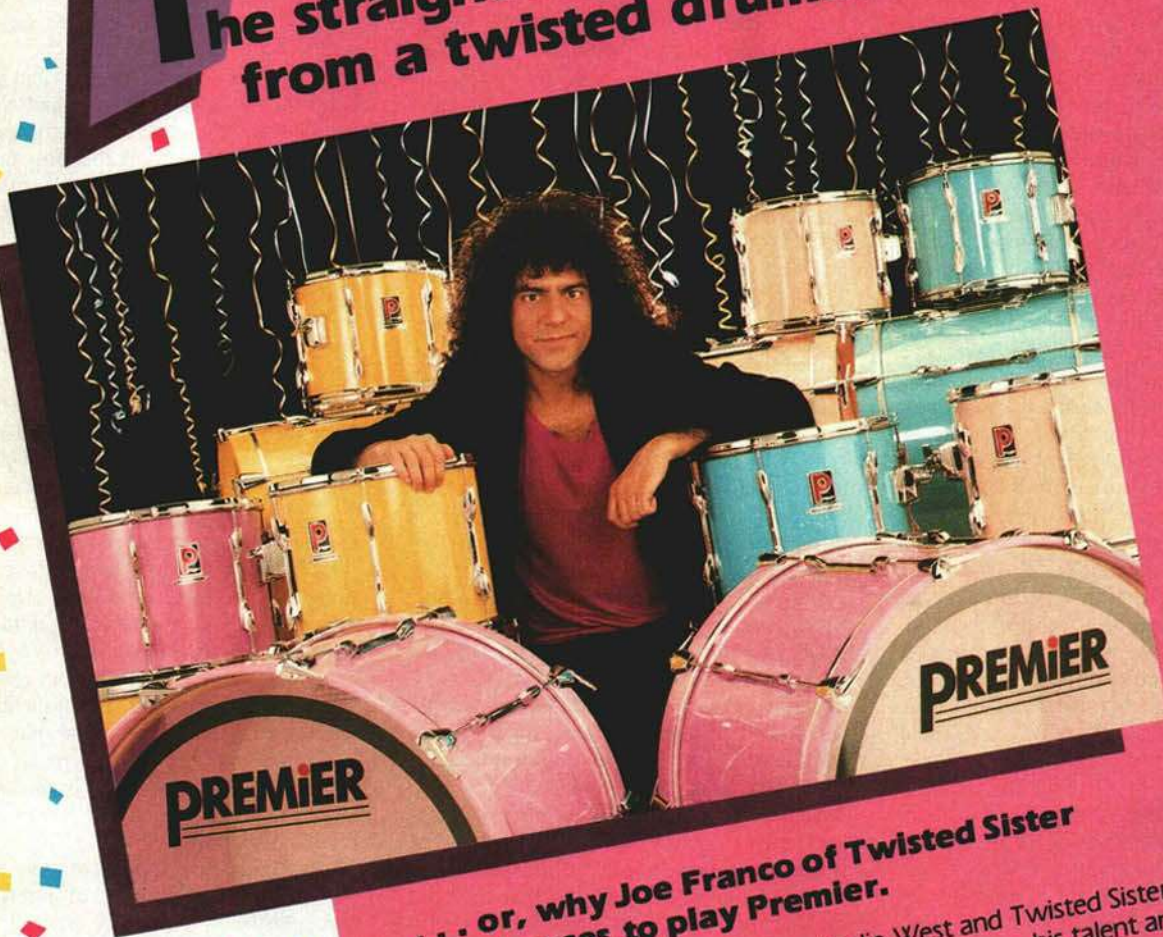
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ISSUE DATE: APRIL 1988

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Twisted Sister's Latest
"Love Is for Suckers"

DRUMHEAD REVIEW

In reading the article that was written regarding Aquarian drumheads in the January 1988 issue of *Modern Drummer*, I would like to call your attention to a paragraph that might be misleading. Rick Van Horn writes, "Aquarian heads are made of Mylar—the same material used in Remo heads. The hoops appear to be of lightweight aluminum, which is also the same material used in Remo heads." I concern myself with that paragraph because of the following.

While it is true that both Aquarian and Remo can be using Mylar (a DuPont product), it is not true that we would be using the identical type of Mylar. We have been fortunate enough to have discovered inherent differences in Mylar many years ago, and consequently we order Mylar to specifications that unless known are not supplied by the DuPont Company. With respect to the aluminum used, you can appreciate the difference in aluminum alloys that are available. Both of the above can change the total performance of a drumhead product, and the drummer ultimately would decide his or her preference.

The articles concerning Evans and Aquarian drumheads were well-written, informative, and very deserving. I wanted to make the points I cited in order to take the position that, along with the technology other companies claim, we, too, continue to advance the state of the art regarding other than animal-skin-type drumheads. It certainly is true that the drummers are entitled to know what's happening. Thanks to *Modern Drummer*, they have that opportunity.

Remo D. Belli
President, Remo Inc.
North Hollywood CA

I would like to set the record straight regarding Mr. Van Horn's review of Aquarian drumheads in the January issue. When Mr. Van Horn approached me with the idea, he used the word "survey." He specifically stated that this would not be an "A/B comparison." Yet, in his review, he constantly refers to the Remo company (13 times).

The only similarity between Remo heads and Aquarian heads is that we both use Mylar, which was originally developed by DuPont. For that matter, Evans and Ludwig also use Mylar for their heads. To suggest that our heads are some sort of copy is like saying that Chevy copies Ford because both cars are made from steel and have four wheels.

Considering the fact that Aquarian does not make a two-ply head, a pinstriped type of head, a plastic dot, or a coated head, saying that we are close to Remo in any way is misleading. Our hoop design is different and is attached to the head *without* epoxy, unlike the Remo head. Our patented *Safety Spiral* and patent pending *Power Dot* are uniquely Aquarian.

Obviously, Mr. Van Horn did not do his homework. Although we did, in fact, experiment with a molded hoop such as he describes, we never manufactured it. We decided to go with an aluminum hoop because it was more consistent and produced a better sound. We have ample literature that explains our hoop design. One would think that simply looking at an aluminum hoop would tell you that it is not molded. In any case, a quick phone call to us could have cleared this up.

We sent drumset heads for the survey last summer, before we were in full production. This is why some heads, such as our textured head for brush playing, were not

available. As far as the head pulling out is concerned, we are in the development stages of a high-tension steel hoop for marching and drum & bugle corps. Again, a quick phone call could have cleared this up.

Our *Power Dot*, which is patent pending, is a result of a lot of testing and work. We decided not to employ a plastic or Mylar dot because they tend to split and many players told us that they did not like the "plastic" attack sound. We were after a warmer, fuller, deeper sound and we achieved it.

Mr. Van Horn's reference to our *Studio-X* head as a sort of "Ambassador with a Deadringer fitted to it" leads one to suspect Mr. Van Horn's hearing. As far as sounding like a *Pinstripe* is concerned, we discovered in our tests that a one-ply head projects much better than a two-ply head. The reason is that the top ply muffles the second one since it covers the entire head area and the attack is pretty much lost.

Reducing ring does not reduce projection, but, in fact, increases clarity. Too much ring and the sounds tend to run together—especially in live performances. This is why drummers remove the front bass drum head. At a distance, the reduced ring makes the sound more definite and more cutting, and the result is much louder and punchier. This is the effect we observed when testing our *Studio-X* heads in live situations.

Mr. Van Horn apparently has not read our catalog or our price list carefully. We make the *Hi-Performance* heads (patented) for snare drums and bass drums only. In this instance, Mr. Van Horn has reviewed a *nonexistent* head when he states that "I tend to think that the heads [on toms]

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What has **Adam Nussbaum** been up to these days? Well, let's just say that relaxation is not a top priority on his busy agenda. Adam has recently been touring with the Michael Brecker band, and explains that his association with the renowned sax player stemmed originally from playing with Michael's brother, Randy. "It was in a trio with John Schofield and Steve Swallow," says Adam. "Sometimes we'd use Randy, and then other times we'd bring in Michael. When I heard that Michael had done an album, I went backstage to see him after a Steps Ahead show and said, 'Look man, if you're going to put a band together, I'd love to do it.' And since he wasn't able to get the cats from the record to go out on tour [Jack DeJohnette played on the LP], and because we always had a good time playing together, he wanted me to do it."

Is there one aspect of Brecker's music that is an overriding challenge to Adam? "The main thing is that this is an all-electric band," he

responds. "When you're dealing with an all-acoustic band, you can wipe out everything else with one stroke of the snare drum. In a band like this, I'm basically the acoustic instrument, along with the sax and the piano, so it creates a different dynamic. You also have to be able to quickly adjust to what's happening and get your ideas out with sufficient power. It also requires a lot of flexibility, and all the experience I've gotten through playing in a variety of situations has made it easy to deal with the style changes. We're covering rock 'n' roll kinds of grooves, some really heavy bashing, straight-ahead jazz, some ballads—a really wide range of styles. But the important thing is to play everything as honestly as possible. If you're doing a blues thing, then play it to death; if you're doing a ballad, then do it with the appropriate feeling."

Nussbaum clearly relishes the ability to don several different "hats" as far as his playing is concerned, and he's par-

layed that expertise into a thriving career. "I really enjoy the variety," he comments. "Jumping from one situation to another requires not only adaptability, but also the ability to bring out a specific aspect of yourself that will make each gig or song the very best it can be. I think one of the reasons that I've had the chance to do all this variety is because I always put that across first—the facet of my playing that suits the particular situation." What's interesting about playing with Brecker is that Adam must command almost all of those stylizations in the course of one evening. "And everything affects what I'm playing with this band," he admits. "Everything I'm hearing from the rest of the guys—every song we do—affects the next song for me. It all somehow comes through."

In addition to his work on jazz pianist/composer Jim McNeely's recent LP, *From The Heart*, Adam also worked on *Homage To John Coltrane* with sax player David Leibman. "It



was a tribute album in light of the 25th anniversary of Coltrane's death," he explains. "The album was split in two: one side was electric with Bob Moses on drums, the other was acoustic, which I did. It's a collection of lesser-known Coltrane compositions, and it was really a lot of fun to do." And on that note, Nussbaum says goodbye as he rushes off to play another set.

—Teri Saccone

After two years' worth of research for the Al Jackson tribute article, I was surprised to find that **Sammy Creason**, Kris Kristofferson's drummer, could still add to the story of the legendary Stax drummer. Sammy and Al were part of a stable of drummers who performed on records coming out of Memphis in the mid '60s. They worked out of three studios: Hi, Stax, and American. Introduced to sessions by Elvis Presley's bass player, Bill Black, Sammy did hundreds of dates, including many at Hi when Al Jackson couldn't make

it. There, producer Willie Mitchell taught him Memphis logic: "It was almost like playing behind the beat but not dragging. In Memphis and Muscle Shoals you played behind, whereas the first stone-cold country date I did in Nashville, everyone was looking at me, and I could tell what they were thinking. It was dragging as far as they were concerned. This was Nashville in the '60s, before things changed."

Sammy enjoyed watching Al Jackson closely: "The drum that Al used a lot was a cheap Ludwig chrome snare. I used

his several times. In fact, I bought one because Al had one!" No apologies required, however, for my story about the old *Powertone*. According to Sammy, "Al just liked to vary things. You know, what's also funny was that Al used the front head on the bass drum most of the time, but he was the first drummer I ever saw who took his front head off. He used it at the Manhattan Club like that, so I took my front head off, too!"

Sammy Creason's stories take us past Memphis. In 1964, the Bill Black Combo-

minus Bill Black, who decided not to show—opened 27 dates for the Beatles. Sammy enjoyed the star treatment and hanging out with royalty. "I was reading the article *Modern Drummer* did on Bill Ludwig. I was there when he gave Ringo that 18k gold snare drum. Ringo lugged it on the plane and showed it to me."

In the late '60s, as a member of the Dixie Flyers, Sammy settled in Miami, the winter home of Atlantic execs whose idea it was to get a house rhythm section going. Under

continued on next page

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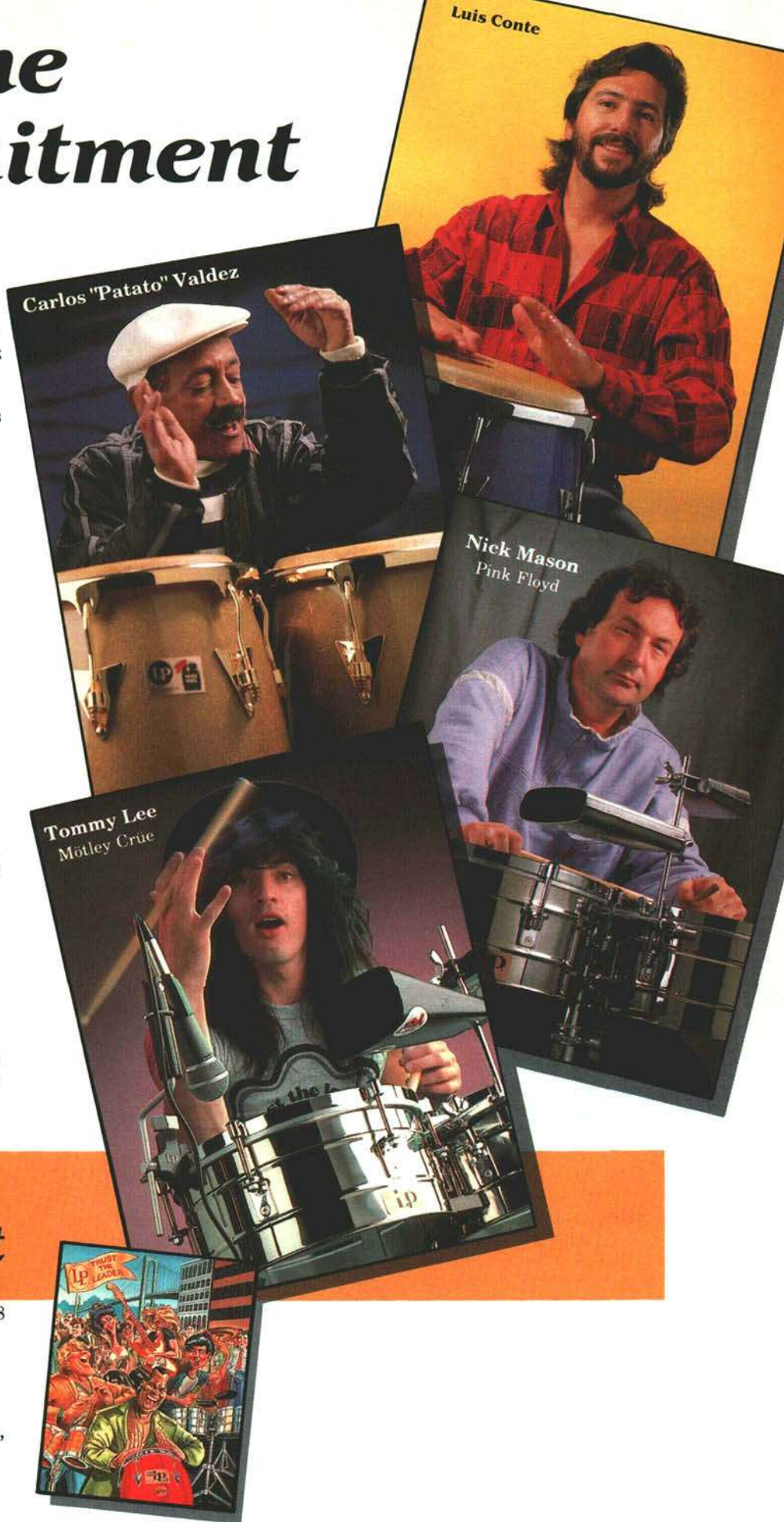
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The Dixie Flyers backed Rita Coolidge, Kris Kristofferson's wife, and she phoned Sammy for a gig with Kris. This was around 1970, and Kris Kristofferson had never used a drummer on a live date before. Things must have worked out, because Sammy has been with him ever since, and on five of his movies, to boot, including *A Star Is Born*. Its success, and

that of *Convoy*, made Kristofferson a hit in countries as far afield as Russia. In 1987, he booked six days in Moscow, loosely under the auspices of The Centre For Soviet-American Dialogue. Ironically, the relationship became strained, when neither PA system nor cooperation were evident on the first date, leaving the band to perform acoustically. On another night, Sammy says, "Five minutes before showtime, this guy right out of a spy novel says, 'You will not perform.' He said that the correct papers were not

filled out, but it was real odd because they let us do the soundcheck." On the sixth night they performed on a bill that included Paul Horn, who used a Russian drummer named Gene. "He was an excellent drummer," Sammy says. "He wanted to offer me anything he could for my Sabian crash cymbal. I could tell he needed that cymbal, so I gave it to him. He was in tears! He couldn't believe I was actually giving him a cymbal. Russian musicians have to wheel and deal on the black market and spend a fortune just to get a

good instrument. You've got to really want to play to be a musician in Russia."

The next time I talk to Sammy, I plan to get him to tell me some more stories about people with whom he's recorded. In his Arkansas drawl, I bet he'll tell a good tale about Dr. John, Jimmy Buffett, Jerry Jeff Walker, Chuck Berry, Tony Joe White, and maybe some more inside stuff on the legendary Al Jackson.

—T. Bruce Wittet

There's never a dull moment for **Jeff Hale**, who has been doing Waylon Jennings' road work for the past two years, who has his own publishing company, and who is a songwriter, session drummer, and producer. "I get burned out on doing just road work or just session work," Jeff says. "Waylon's is the perfect road gig, because we do about 90 shows a year, which gives me plenty of time to do other things."

What Waylon needs, Hale says, is a heavy foot. "A real heavy foot," Jeff laughs. "Waylon's group is rowdier than any country band I've ever heard. It's the hottest live band, country-wise, that I've worked with. It's a lot of energy. He really lets you play, although you know your

boundaries. If you get a little outside of that boundary, you get that look."

This year, aside from normal tour activities, Jeff went to Sweden and Norway with Jennings, and played a theatrical production of Waylon's musical autobiography, *A Man Called Hoss*, at Duke University. "It was a six-show run, and it was produced by real theatrical producers, which was a whole new experience. Usually Waylon is the main man, but this time there were four with the producers and everything. It was a treat and a real learning experience."

By this time, *A Man Called Hoss* should be enjoying an off-Broadway run. And back in Nashville, Jeff plans to do at least part of Waylon's next album, as well as some copro-

duction with Jeff Bridges. He recently cut some tracks and produced a project for Tony Joe White, with whom he worked for nine years, and he produced a pop project for Jamie Kyle, who was in *Star Search*.

Lately he's also been doing a lot of writing with MTM songwriter and artist Ronnie Rogers, and according to Jeff, he writes on drums. "I have a kit down in my music room, which stays up all the time, and next to it I have a Linn Drum Machine. When I'm practicing, which I do every day, and I stumble onto something, I'll instantly program it into the Linn. Then I'll go for structure and put that into the Linn. Ronnie and I would listen to things I had put in the Linn, and say, 'Okay, what do



we hear here?' We'd start hearing the melody, and we'd mess with a guitar."

Jeff has played drums for Rogers in the studio recently, and can be heard on Jesse Colter's new double album as well as jingles for DuPont and Chevrolet.

—Robyn Flans

James Stroud has been working live with the Kingsnakes as well as producing Marty Haggar. **Mason Treat** is currently on the road with John Anderson. **Richie Morales** is finishing up Spyro Gryn's upcoming summer release. **Buddy Harman** recording with K.D. Lang. That's **Walfredo Reyes** on all the ethnic South American music in Cyndi Lauper's film, *Vibes*. **Don Henley** is finishing up an album. **Gordon Gale** is on "Far Away Lands," the duet by David Pomeranz and Sasha Melin. Yes, that was **Carmine Appice** in the recently released horror film *Black Roses*. On the musical side of things, Carmine recently joined forces with engineer Angelo Arcuri to produce a six-song demo for the rock band NRG. Percus-

sionist **Neil Grover** performed a series of concerts with Julie Andrews in New York recently. He also recently toured Japan as timpanist with the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra under the direction of John Williams. **Cactus Moser** finishing up a record with Highway 101. "Santa" **Davis**, who was shot when Peter Tosh was murdered, has completely recovered and was recently touring with Ini Kamoze. **Michael Carabello**, **Francisco Aguabella**, **Pete Escovedo**, and **Victor Pantoja** have been gigging together around the Bay Area. **Warren Benbow** recently worked on Teruo Nakamura's latest album. **Vinnie Colaiuta** recently worked on David Sanborn's new release (along with **Andy Newmark**), as well as on

albums for Lee Ritenour, Tom Scott, Nik Kershaw, and Al Stewart, and one track for Patti Austin. Vinnie has also spent a great deal of time in Japan recently performing with the GRP All-Stars and doing a series of clinics. **Michael Barsimanto** played some recent dates with Billy Preston, recorded an album with Stuart Hamm, and played on soundtracks to *DOA* and *The Moderns*. He's been playing and writing with a group called DV8 that contributed a song to a Disney Film called *Rock N Roll Mom* and another film called *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*. Congratulations to Sherry and **Mike Baird** on the birth of their son Ryan Michael. **Manu Katche** recently in the studio with Joan Arma-

trading. **Will Dower** recently recorded with the Queensland Symphony, who did all of the music for Australia's upcoming Expo '88. Dower will be touring the U.S. in April and May with the jazz group Mister Crow. **Paul Wertico** will be featured at the **Les DeMerle Jazz Drum Spectacular** in Chicago this coming June. Glenn Symmonds recently in the studio with Eddie Money. Lou Appel touring with Debbie Gibson. **Vince Barranco** recently toured East Germany with Gospel artist Virgia Dishmon. In memoriam: **Laurent Rebboah** passed away the day before Thanksgiving. He had cancer. Our condolences to his family and friends. **Gary Husband** has joined Level 42.





Ed Mann

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Silicon Mallet

Ed Mann is an LA based percussionist and composer. He teaches percussion at CalArts, is a founding member of The Repercussion Unit, and is probably best known for his work with Frank Zappa.

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MUSIC KEY



CHAD WACKERMAN

Q. I love your impressive performance on Albert Lee's *Speechless* album. Your fabulous fills and ambidextrous style sure inspired me to hit the practice room. My question is: Could you write out the chart for the intro to "Bullish Boogie"? That's an excellent groove.

Darrell Nutt
Barker NY

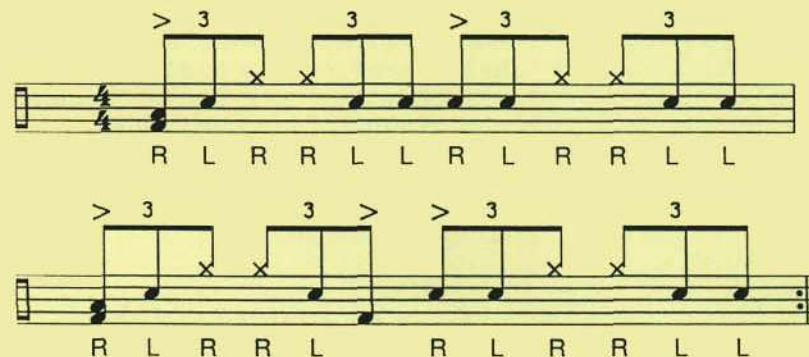
A. Thanks for writing in about the "Bullish Boogie" pattern. Albert's *Speechless* album was done very quickly. Many of the tunes were arranged only minutes before the "record" button was pushed! The pattern for "Bullish Boogie" is based on a paradiddle-diddle (RLRRLL), as shown below:



I modified the pattern a bit by adding the bass drum to it:



Finally, I added a floor tom beat on the downbeat of each bar, and ultimately created the pattern shown below:



Practice this pattern slowly at first, listening for evenness. Once it becomes comfortable, try making the left hand quite a bit softer than the right; this will imply more of a half-time feel. Once you've mastered this pattern, go into the country-shuffle pattern shown below (which was the basic drum pattern for the melody of the song). Try to make it a smooth transition, and have fun!

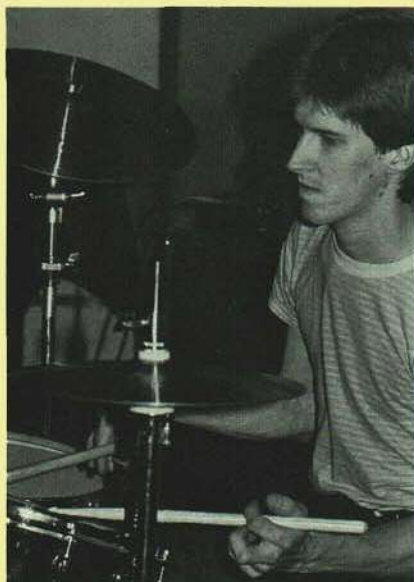


Photo by Paul Jonason

CLIFF DAVIES

Q. I have always admired your drumming on Ted Nugent's "Motor City Madhouse." I've been playing drums scarcely two years myself, and I can't seem to grasp an understanding of the hi-hat and bass drum in the main rhythm of the song. Is it a two-handed hi-hat or an extremely fast single-handed hi-hat? If it is single-handed, should I play it with a shuffle technique? My question about the bass drum is similar: Is it single or double bass?

Ward Armitage

Wilkesport, Ontario, Canada

A. I might burst your bubble—but relieve you of some anxiety—when I tell you that the drum part on "Motor City Madhouse" is not playable by a single human. You may have heard the term "layering" as it applies to multi-track recording, and may know it as a method of recording instruments and players one at a time instead of live in the studio together. The method is widely used for all sorts of reasons, including perfection of individual sound and ultimate performance.

On that particular track I wanted a crazy, machine-like effect to go with the craziness of the song. Since I was unable to play what I wanted to create all at one time, I applied the layering method to just the drumkit. I put down four different tracks of drums: a double bass drum track, a snare drum backbeat, a two-handed hi-hat track—straight eight to the bar—and a track of cymbal crashes and tom fills. "A little tough to handle live," you're probably thinking. Well, sometimes the artistic effect is more important than individual performance. I still had to play and coordinate the four parts, of course, which was no mean feat. Layering enabled me to get a more "processed" drum sound, which added to the machine effect. The different "layers" of drums added to the "Motor City" madness of it all.

The Gonzo album has a decent version with a more realistic part for live playing: double bass drums eight to the bar, straight four on a locked-down hi-hat, and a snare drum backbeat. Thanks for the interest; I'm glad to oblige you.



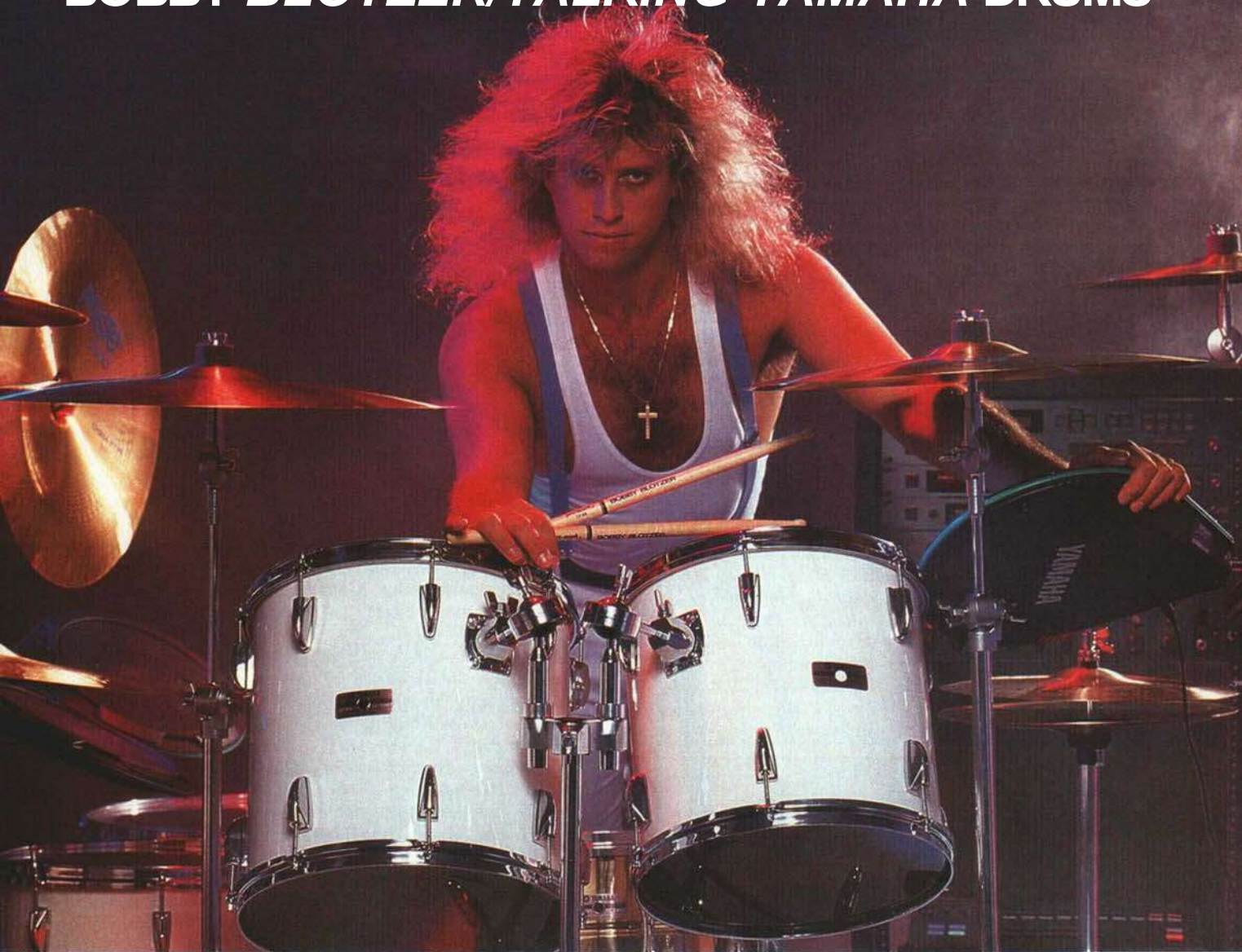
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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Editor's note: In the January 1988 It's Questionable department, the answer to a question pertaining to double bass drum technique included a list of notable double bass players to listen to. Many sharp-eyed MD readers have written to point out that Nicko McBrain's name was on that list in error. Our congratulations to those readers, and our compliments to Mr. McBrain, whose intricate and musical bass drum work is, in fact, accomplished with only one bass drum!

Q. I have recently heard about a four-octave vibraphone, made by the Bergerault Company in France. Is there anything you can tell me about this instrument? Any information you could provide would be most appreciated.

G.L.
Oakland CA

A. You can obtain detailed information regarding Bergerault products by contacting the American distributor, The World Of Percussion, at P.O. Box 146, Browns Mills, New Jersey 08015.

Q. I have two questions. First, how may I obtain a Slingerland catalog? Second, can you give me an address for the Rogers drum company, now that it has been reactivated?

W.M.
Huntington WV

A. In order to obtain a Slingerland catalog, send \$3.50 and a request for the catalog to the attention of David Patrick, National Sales & Marketing Manager, Gretsch/Slingerland, 1 Gretsch Plaza, Ridgeland, South Carolina 29936. For information on the new Rogers Drum Company, write them at 399 Lake Avenue, Staten Island, New York 10303. For information pertaining to parts or service for Rogers drums earlier than 1987, contact Al Drew's Music, 526 Front Street, Woonsocket, Rhode Island 02895, or call (401) 769-3552. Al Drew's Music purchased all the drums and hardware that existed in the Fender warehouse

shortly after Island Music took over the distribution of the new Rogers line early in 1987. Consequently, Al Drew's is now Fender's recognized warranty agent for pre-1987 Rogers equipment.

Q. I am a performance major in percussion at North Texas State University. I am currently a freshman and looking into funds to continue my education next year. I am sure there are scholarships available for which I could apply, but I am unsure as to what they are or how I may obtain information about them. If you could offer any assistance as to who I should contact to find further information on percussion scholarships, your help would be greatly appreciated.

C.D.
Denton TX

A. Your best source for information on scholarships is generally the financial aid office at your own school. North Texas State's music department is nationally known; it is logical to assume that some information regarding music scholarships should be available to you there. In addition, you might contact the offices of the National Association of Jazz Educators, P.O. Box 724, Manhattan, Kansas 66502, (913) 776-8744, and the Percussive Arts Society, 214 W. Main Street, Box 697, Urbana, Illinois 61801-0697. Both are organizations devoted to music education, and may be able to point you in the right direction.

Q. Brush work seems to be becoming a lost art, especially among younger players today. Can you suggest sources for obtaining material on this subject?

C.T.
Morro Bay CA

A. Two excellent sources of information on brushes would be Contemporary Brush Techniques, by Louie Bellson, Hank Bellson, and Dave Black (Alfred Publishing Co., P.O. Box 5964, Sherman Oaks, California 91413), and The Sound Of Brushes, by Ed Thigpen (Action/Reaction, Bagerstraede 3, 1617 V Copenhagen, Denmark). Both are book/cassette combinations and include excellent instructional material from acknowledged masters of brushwork. Both books are readily available wherever instructional drum books are sold, or you may contact the publishers for the name of a dealer near you.

Q. I am a semi-professional musician who has recently become interested in working with a jazz band. So far, every time I have auditioned with such a band (my college jazz band, to be precise), I haven't made the cut. Although I am not discouraged, failing my next audition is not high on my priority list. To practice, I have been listening to as much jazz as possible, playing along with it, and working out of Jim Chapin's book.

One of my problems with my last few auditions was my "feel." But that will cure in time, I believe, as I listen to more and more jazz. But my biggest problem has been my reading; sitting down to a chart I've never seen of a song I've never heard has not been my forte. I used to look at *Drum Charts* magazine, but that was usually filled with rock charts. Is there anything you could suggest that would help me?

F.M.
Hillsborough CA

A. One of the best texts we know of on the subject of chart reading is Gil Graham's Beginning Drum Chart Reading. Gil is a percussion associate at Berklee College of Music, and he designed his book specifically for the chart reading lab at Berklee.

A source for chart reading material and the development of feel as well would be the many Music Minus One albums available in the big band idiom. These offer complete band arrangements with the drum track removed, so that you may read the included chart and play along with the band at the same time. Contact Music Minus One, 50 South Buckhout Street, Irvington, New York 10533, (914) 591-5100.



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DANNY

By Rick Mattingly

Photo by Rick Malkin



GOTTSLIEB



It's those phone calls, usually made from airports. "Hi, it's Danny. I've got a few minutes before I have to board, so I thought I'd say hello. I'm on my way to Atlanta to do a clinic for Ludwig, then I go to Wisconsin for another clinic, and then I'm going to Boston to do a couple of gigs. I'm going to try to be back in New York on Sunday in time to go see the Mets play the Montreal Expos. On Monday morning I'm recording a jingle, and then I'm playing with Gil that night. In between I'm going to try to take a lesson from Morello, but I also have to try to get together with my accountant, because on Tuesday I leave for Europe to do some gigs with Jonas Hellborg, and I'm supposed to go to the Paiste factory while I'm over there, and I might also be doing a couple of clinics..." and so on. "But after that I'll be home for two weeks with nothing to do, so I'll call you and we can hang."

Two weeks with nothing to do? Sure Danny. I'll believe that when I see it. Sure enough, another phone call from another airport: "Hi, it's Danny. I'm on my way to L.A. to record for a week, and then Mark and I have some gigs in Hawaii with our group Elements...."



When Donny's friends get together, they often compare notes. "Have you heard from Gottlieb lately?" one will ask. "Yeah, he called me from the Denver airport last week. He had a bunch of clinics lined up, and then he was going to England with Gil Evans. After that, he was supposed to do some gigs in Europe with Randy Brecker. He was trying to work it out so that, during a couple of days off with Randy, he could fly to Florida, do a gig with John Abercrombie, and still make it back to Europe in time for Randy's next gig. But there was also a possibility that John McLaughlin might want to record, so he was afraid to make any commitments to Brecker or Abercrombie."

Everyone tends to marvel at the degree of chaos that surrounds Donny's life, and yet, somehow, he pulls it off. Rod Morgenstein tells a typical story: "Danny did an instructional cassette for my company. When he arrived at the studio, there weren't any spurs on the bass drum, and there was a wood floor without any carpeting. I was really concerned, because I'm the kind of guy who will spend an hour moving things a fraction of an inch to get them in exactly the right place. But Danny wasn't the least bit concerned. He put a guitar amplifier in front of the bass drum, and even though that kept it from moving forward, it still rocked from side to side when he played it. Meanwhile, the cymbal stands were gradually sliding across the floor to the point where, by the end of a take, Danny had to reach out as far as he could to hit them. And he DIDN'T CARE," Rod laughs, shaking his head in amazement. "The drumset was sliding around all over the place, and he still played great."

And that, as much as anything, explains how Danny Gottlieb deals with life. His focus on playing the drums is so strong that nothing else interferes, and he'll go to any amount of trouble to play a gig, do a clinic, or take a lesson from someone who can show him something new. And it's a very pure love for the music itself. He has turned down better paying gigs in order to work with musicians that he respects, such as John McLaughlin or Airtó—musicians who presented him with opportunities for growth, if not for big bucks.

And the growth never stops. I mean, here's a guy who has distinguished himself with such artists as Pat Metheny, John McLaughlin, and Gil Evans, who has the versatility to play Brazilian music with Flora Purim and Airtó, rock 'n' roll with Bobby Rydell, and fill in for Mel Lewis with Mel's Jazz Orchestra, and who has begun to establish his own identity with Elements—a group he co-leads with bassist Mark Egan—and with his own solo album. A lot of people would be happy to have even one of those credits, and would feel that they had accomplished quite a bit. But all Gottlieb ever talks about is how much he still has to learn. He'll pull off a blinding single-stroke roll, but when complimented on it, reply, "That sucked. You should hear Morello's single-stroke roll." And he's not being humble. He really isn't satisfied with his technique, and probably never will be.

But that's one of the things that keeps him going. He has an insatiable thirst for knowledge, and he is equally committed to sharing that knowledge with others. He is an avid clinician, and he was also instrumental in helping Joe Morello, Bob Moses, Gary Chester, and Airtó get their books into print. In fact, it's typical of Danny that he has been more concerned with helping those he learned from spread their knowledge than he has with trying to write a book of his own.

With all of the different gigs, the different teachers, the different influences, it's sometimes hard to pinpoint just who and what Danny is. But I'm reminded of Buddy Rich complaining about drummers being labeled as "big band drummers" or "small group drummers." As far as he was concerned, "If you're going to call yourself a drummer, then it means you can play the drums in any setting and do what's appropriate for that situation." Danny Gottlieb can certainly call himself a drummer.

RM: A solo record is supposed to make some kind of a statement about the person who makes it. Given all of the different types of music you are involved with, how did you decide what you were going to put on your album, *Aquamarine*, that would represent you?

DG: In order to answer that, I'll have to tell you how the record came about, because that had a lot to do with it. First of all, I've basically been a sideman ever since I got out of college in 1975. That worked out fine because I was never a visionary in the way that someone like Pat Metheny was. Back when we were at Miami together, he already knew exactly what he wanted to do in music. But I didn't really have a game plan as to what I was going to do when I

grew up. I still don't know, [laughs] I just knew that I loved to play the instrument, and I still love to play a lot of different types of music. So I've always sort of dealt with my career the way I deal with the drums, which is that I take it as it comes and do what the situation calls for.

But after all the years of playing with all the people I've been able to play with, I felt that something was missing. I gradually realized that I wanted to do a project that I had complete control over. Doing a record under my own name became almost an obsession. And why not? A lot of the people I play with—people I consider my peers—were doing the same thing. It's not that I would ever give up playing with other musicians, but I thought that if I could establish myself in some way as a solo artist, then I might have a little more control over my own life.

At first, my basic concept was simply that I wanted to do music that I liked. But as you pointed out, I like a lot of different kinds of music, so I had quite a wide range to choose from. I ended up asking Doug Hall, a very dear friend of mine who works for a music production company, to produce the record with me. I felt that having an outside, objective opinion might help me narrow down all of my ideas into a unified project. And he did exactly that.

The other major factor was that I did not have a record deal the whole time we worked on the album. So, since I wasn't doing it for any company, the only person I had to make happy was myself. I knew that I would have to live with this record, so I would have to be happy with everything that went on it.

RM: What sort of general guidelines did you narrow it down to?

DG: It started with the same basic concept as the original Pat Metheny Group: enjoyable, pleasant music with great solos. Of course, later Pat's group got a little dissonant with stuff like "Offramp," but for the most part it was pretty melodies with top-notch solos. The other thing I wanted to show was a side of me that most people are unaware of, which is that I really love pop music. I listened to pop as much as I listened to Miles or Coltrane. When the Metheny Group first started, we were like a high-school garage band playing jazz, and we would play "Louie, Louie" or "Wipeout" in the middle of a gig. I remember a gig at the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco, and somebody yelled out, "Play 'Woody Bully.'" I almost fell off of my drum stool—not because he asked for that song, but because I *liked* that song. My first gig after college had been with Bobby Rydell, and I had a great time playing "Volare" and all of that



stuff.

But I'm also very involved with the jazz tradition, and this record had to reflect that, too. So I really wasn't looking for a specific style that would make this record cohesive. I just felt in my heart that my playing would pull everything together, because no matter what style I'm doing, there are elements in there that sound similar. So that was the beginning of the concept.

RM: You mentioned your peers, most of whom are jazz musicians. A lot of jazz players put down rock and pop music. Do you ever discuss your feelings about pop music with them, or do you avoid the subject?

DG: I don't avoid the subject, but yes, I do run into that attitude. A few of the jazz musicians I work with just don't want to know about rock or pop music. I respect that. They realize that there are just so many hours in the day, and they are so involved with what they are doing that they don't want to sacrifice the amount of time it would take to get involved with something else.

RM: That's fine for someone who simply chooses to specialize in a particular area. But when I asked the question, I was actually referring to snobbery. A lot of times, if people who are primarily known as jazz musicians start blending rock or

pop influences into their music, they are accused of selling out.

DG: I think there is less of that now than there used to be. When George Benson hit with "Masquerade" and Chuck Mangione did "Feels So Good," a lot of people put them down. But I don't hear as much of that today. Of course, it's hard for me to generalize, because I've been dealing with record companies a lot over the past few months, and they are looking at the success of artists like Kenny G.

Their bottom line is that they want to see some sales.

Actually, while the record was being made, I did take a little flack from some of the people who played on it. It was sounding a little too "inside" to some of my friends, and they were saying, "Is this really what you want to be doing?" But

"THERE SEEM TO BE MANY MORE PLAYING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WHO SOUND GENERIC THAN FOR PEOPLE WHO SOUND TOTALLY UNIQUE."

there's not one song that I don't like, or one thing that I would do differently if I had to do it over again.

Most of the people I respect will like something if it's well done. That seems to be the bottom line. A lot of jazz musicians I know will listen to pop and rock music just because the production is so good. The overall sound has become so much a part of our industry now, partly because CDs are selling so well. The leaders of today's music community are still concerned with tradition, but they also have to be aware of what's going on in the world—new instruments, new sounds. That means you can't afford to be close-minded.

Of course, the danger with the new technology is that you can take something easy, and even if it doesn't really have great playing, you can make it sound so good that people will like it. Maybe it's the success of things like Windham Hill, but whatever it is, people are listening to music that just sounds pretty and accepting it as being great.

RM: In your case, since you didn't have a record contract, you weren't under any particular pressure to be "commercial."

DG: Right. I had originally made a five-song demo and had taken it to various record companies, but I got absolutely nowhere. I thought I had all of this credibility from playing with Pat Metheny, John McLaughlin, Al Di Meola, winning a *Modern Drummer* poll...forget it. As a solo artist, all of that meant nothing. Ultimately, I had to finish the record and then find someone who liked it. And that's what happened. A friend of mine named Sam Keiser, who used to work at Atlantic, sent a copy of the tape to Peter Koepke at Atlantic, and he loved it. He knew my playing before that, but that didn't really matter that much. It wasn't even that important that John McLaughlin was on one of the cuts. The only thing that mattered was that Peter liked the music.

For drummers, I think there is a message behind all of this. A lot of people think that you have to have a big name and a big following to make your own record. Well, whatever name I've got didn't help that much. In fact, it didn't help at all. I got a deal with Atlantic because they liked the music, not because I used to be in the Pat Metheny Group or that I had played with John McLaughlin. In fact, I also had offers from a couple of other record companies, but only *after* the record was finished. Not before.

At the same time, you have to be ready for something like

this. Someone told me I should have made my own record five years ago, but I wasn't ready then. In fact, I remember once having an artistic dispute with Pat, and he said, "If that's what you want to do, do it on your own record." At the time, I thought, "Yeah, right. When am I ever going to make a record?" But then, at a certain point, making my own record was the next logical step.

RM: Let's talk through the individual tunes. I'd be interested to hear your own analysis of what each one says about your drumming.

DG: Actually, the one thing that isn't on there is a lot of amazingly slick drumming. I did that by choice, because I was more concerned with the overall picture of what the record did emotionally than I was with showing off some hot drum licks. After hearing the tape, Peter Koepke told me that, had it been a drum record, he wouldn't have been interested. But I didn't do it for that purpose. It was a completely honest decision.

The first song, "Aquamarine," was kind of interesting. We sampled my drum sound on the Synclavier, and the first half of the tune is the machine. About halfway through the tune there's a short drum solo that I played live, and from that point on, the drums are me playing live. But since the machine had samples of my drums, it all sounds the same.

RM: Why would a drummer use a machine for part of a song, rather than play it?

DG: That's just the way the song evolved. We originally put down a demo with the machine, but it sounded so good with the machine that I didn't see the point of trying to exactly duplicate that part on the drums. The machine also sounded good with the synthesizer bass. I played cymbals over the top of it, so it still has a live element. It's that cymbal sound that I've kind of been refining over the years with a Paiste 602 Flatride. In fact, I get hired to do overdubs on cymbals a lot of times, and some people want me to use that specific cymbal.

RM: Talk about specialization!

DG: [laughs] If you need someone to overdub a Paiste Flatride, I'm your man. But those cymbals do have a certain character and texture that I'm very comfortable with.

The little drum solo is...credible. I did a single-stroke roll on the hi-hat for about two seconds, and when Morello heard it, he went, "Yeah!" So I felt like I passed the test.

There's a wonderful percussionist named Cafe on several of the cuts. He's from Brazil and works with Roberta Flack. He and I hear time in exactly the same place. We sometimes do the same fills in unison, without even looking at each other. And everything he does sounds great to me. He can just play one triangle note, and it will be perfect because it's in exactly the right place.

I co-wrote the song "Monterey" with Joe Satriani, a great guitar player from San Francisco. He and I toured together with Jonas Hellborg, the bass player from Mahavishnu. It's probably one of the strongest drum tracks I've done—not that it's amazing drumming, but just that I played really well with the click. It's just solid bass, snare, and hi-hat. It doesn't have the crack of someone like Steve Jordan, but it's got a warmth that I like.

RM: The drums are not particularly dominant on the track.

DG: We tried to remix it to give the drums more of an edge. I had played it for Rod [Morgenstein], and he suggested that we bring the drums up a little bit. We tried it, but it completely destroyed the mood of the piece. The

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Photo by Bobby Levins

Notes On My Drumming

by Danny Gottlieb

MUSIC KEY



Most of the drumming on *Aquamarine* is fairly simple, as compared with the more complicated rhythms and drum patterns used in a lot of contemporary music. I wanted to play what I felt was appropriate for each tune, as opposed to throwing in slick drum licks because it was a drummer's album. That way, the focus would be on the entire piece of music. Like all of us

drummers, as my playing experience increases and I mature as a musician, I'm trying to edit my playing so that each beat, fill, and texture has meaning. Of course, I want to get some drum stuff in there as well, so a good place to begin this illustration would be the title track, "Aquamarine." In the middle of the song, I play an eight-bar solo over a basic rhythm pattern. The pattern is:

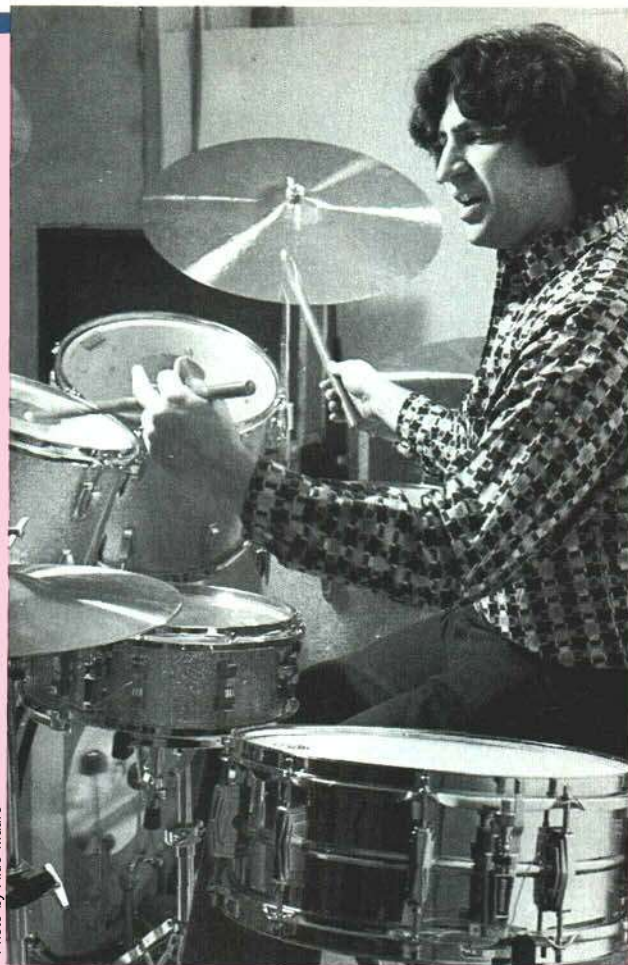
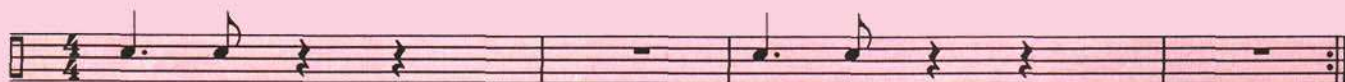
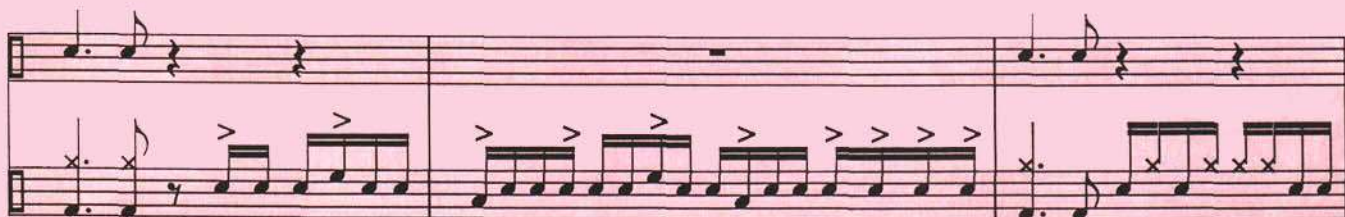
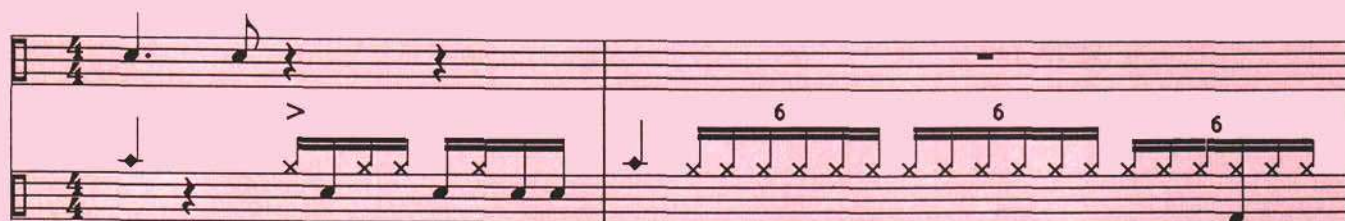



Photo by Aldo Mauro



My solo was basically:



A color photograph of a man with dark, curly hair and a serious expression, looking directly at the camera. He is wearing a white tank top with the words "CHINA CLUB" printed in large, bold, red capital letters. He is positioned in front of a professional recording setup, with two large condenser microphones on stands flanking him. The background is dark, with some out-of-focus blue lights visible. The overall tone is gritty and professional.

NEW YORK ATTITUDE

Alan Childs

by Robyn Flans

Alan Childs is one of the lucky ones: His dreams are coming true. But it isn't just luck, for Alan has created his own fate. It was his passion for the Beatles and the music of the British Invasion of the '60s that led Alan to become involved with music. It was the '60s music that became his goal and his diet—so much so that this New York born-and-bred drummer has worked primarily with British groups. It was a particular thrill for him when, a couple of years ago, he joined Julian Lennon's band, since it was Julian's father who, as a member of the Beatles, changed Alan's life.

David Bowie was also part of the music that stirred Alan, and this past year, Alan greeted the opportunity to play with Bowie with ecstatic enthusiasm. And what a concert! So much was happening on that stage, which was in the design of a spider with colored lighted tentacles surrounding the production: Five dancers interacted with Bowie, whose presence seemed larger than life, plus there was Peter Frampton—who could have been the star himself—handling the guitar duties. That didn't leave an abundance of space for the other players, but there was Alan, holding it all together. And he couldn't have been happier, for it symbolized the success of the fruits of his labor.

RF: What got you started in music?

AC: It's the old cliché, "I saw the Beatles on *The Ed Sullivan Show*." It was just an exciting feeling. A little before that, I'd seen a live band for the first time at the opening of a restaurant. Standing near the drummer, I was amazed. That was the beginning, and then when the Beatles were on *Ed Sullivan*, that was it. My father

bought me a snare drum that I played on for a while, and then I switched to guitar for about a year. I got my first drumset at 12 or 13.

RF: What made you go back to drums?

AC: Just a feeling. A friend of mine had a kit, and I was able to play a twist beat the very first time I sat behind it. He asked me where I learned it, and I said I didn't know—that I just could just do it from having watched other drummers.

RF: Who did you watch besides Ringo?

AC: I watched all the TV shows at the time, like *Shindig*, and every week Ed Sullivan had people like the Dave Clark 5. After I actually sat behind the drums and was able to play, I saw there was hope, so I figured I should stick with it.

RF: Did you take lessons?

AC: No, not for years to come. I just used to play along with records. I remember trying to keep up with "Henry VIII" [Herman's Hermits], which was really fast on the ride cymbal. I was struggling to keep my right hand going.

RF: What other music were you playing with?

AC: A lot of Beatles, and "A Taste Of Honey" by Herb Alpert & The Tijuana Brass. Then I played in a band with some friends when I was 13 and 14. We called ourselves the Pathfinders. I was living in Brooklyn at the time. Then there were the Valours, who covered songs by bands like the Rascals, Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels, and the Beatles.

RF: Did you join the school band?

AC: In junior high school I played snare drum in the band for a little while, which was where I learned the basics of reading.

RF: Was that something you wanted to do?

AC: I enjoyed it. I played at the talent show, and then I backed up one of the teachers in the teachers' talent show, and that made the school paper. It wasn't until eight or ten years later that I actually went to a teacher to learn how to read charts.

RF: Why did you go?

AC: When I realized that drumming was going to be my living, I felt I'd have to be able to handle any situation and every kind of music. I could play anything, but I realized that, if they put a chart in front of me, I'd be in big trouble. So I went to Joe Cusatis, who has the Modern Drum Shop in New York City. I studied with him for about two and a half years when I was about 22.

RF: That's kind of late to start with lessons.

AC: I felt I had to do it, since my income depended on drums. It helped because I was able to do gigs I never thought I would be able to do, like playing hotels in New York with the Peter Duchin Orchestra. I would do these gigs at night in a tuxedo and bow tie, and sometimes they'd have charts. That allowed me to do what I wanted during the daytime, even if it meant no money, because I was making some money doing those gigs. And I did jingles.

RF: How did you get into jingles?

AC: I had a friend who got into advertising, and he was responsible for the music, so he'd call me. I used to do them three times a week—*Preparation H*, *New Country Yogurt*—and I actually met some real studio musicians. It was my first time playing with a click track and things like that.

RF: What was your very first studio experience?

AC: It was when I was in my late teens

WITH BRITISH ROOTS



Photo by Rick Malkin

'WHEN I REALIZED THAT DRUMMING WAS GOING TO BE MY LIVING, I FELT THAT I'D HAVE TO BE ABLE TO HANDLE ANY SITUATION.'

with a kind of blues-oriented band. We did some demos, and I loved it. To hear myself playing on tape was incredible.

RF: Did you know what you were doing?

AC: I didn't know at the time what to listen for, but to hear myself for the first time in a studio was a thrill, and I still look forward to every time I go in.

RF: What goals were you pursuing?

AC: I was hoping to be in a band where the music was to my liking and where I had a lot of musical input. It worked for a little while with a British/German group I was in, but we never really took off. We had a record deal in Europe, and I lived in Hamburg for six months in 1979.

RF: You were reliving a little bit of the Beatles' history.

AC: We actually played the Star Club, although I think the location was different. That was my first thrill.

RF: What was the name of the group?

AC: Electra V. We were kind of Euro-pop before it was popular in America. We had trouble getting signed in America because they weren't ready for it. We toured and opened a few shows for Squeeze, and we were starting to get popular. Columbia Records in Germany wanted to pick us up and give us a great producer, and the singer screwed everything up. He wanted a different producer, and the record company said, "You don't tell us what to do. Forget it." I had put two or three years of my life into this band to get screwed up by one guy. It was at that point that I said, "I'm not going to put all my time into a band anymore. I'm going to play for people who are established. Maybe later I'll try again." It was at that point, when I went back to America, that I played with Nona Hendryx. I'd say that was the breakthrough gig for me.

RF: How did you get that?

AC: It was through an ad in the *Village Voice*. I was living in Brooklyn, and I went to New York City to audition. There were something like 40 drummers, and I

got the gig. In this band were percussionist Jose Rossi, who went on to Weather Report, and Eddie Martinez on guitar, who went on to sessions galore and to Mick Jagger. This is the little clique I fell into.

RF: What did you have to do for the audition?

AC: There were two auditions. The first one was just Jose and I. Jose would get behind the kit and play three different patterns. He'd do the first one, I'd watch and listen, and then he'd say, "Okay, now you try it." It was interesting; I'd never done an audition that way. I did the three patterns, and they said, "Okay, we'll call you."

RF: What kind of patterns were they?

AC: They were in four, a rock feel, but with a very syncopated Gadd kind of touch, with little grace notes on the snare drum before the 2 and 4, and little things on the hi-hat. Part two of the audition was actually playing with the band a week later. I was the last one to play in a room where all the drummers were standing and watching each other. It was a little intimidating, but being the last one, I fortunately knew everything they were going to ask me to play.

RF: Did you know Nona's material?

AC: A little, because I used to go see her live. She always had a good band. It's kind of like progressive black rock music. It was different; I really liked it.

RF: How long were you with her?

AC: It was only for two weeks, because at that point I was asked to join a band on CBS, and they offered me an incredible amount of money. They were just about to start their album, and I wanted to be on an album.

RF: So we're back to the band thing again. Who was it?

AC: A group called Bullseye. Nothing ever happened. The record came out, and we did a few shows. But CBS was going through some problems at the time with cutbacks, and it affected the promotion. I didn't spend much time with it, and I went on from there.

RF: Did you regret having left Nona?

AC: A little, but I found out that, after I quit, it was the end of that era for her band. They broke up and went their own ways. I started getting demo sessions around town and an album here and there.

RF: How does one start to get sessions?

AC: I was playing in New York a lot with

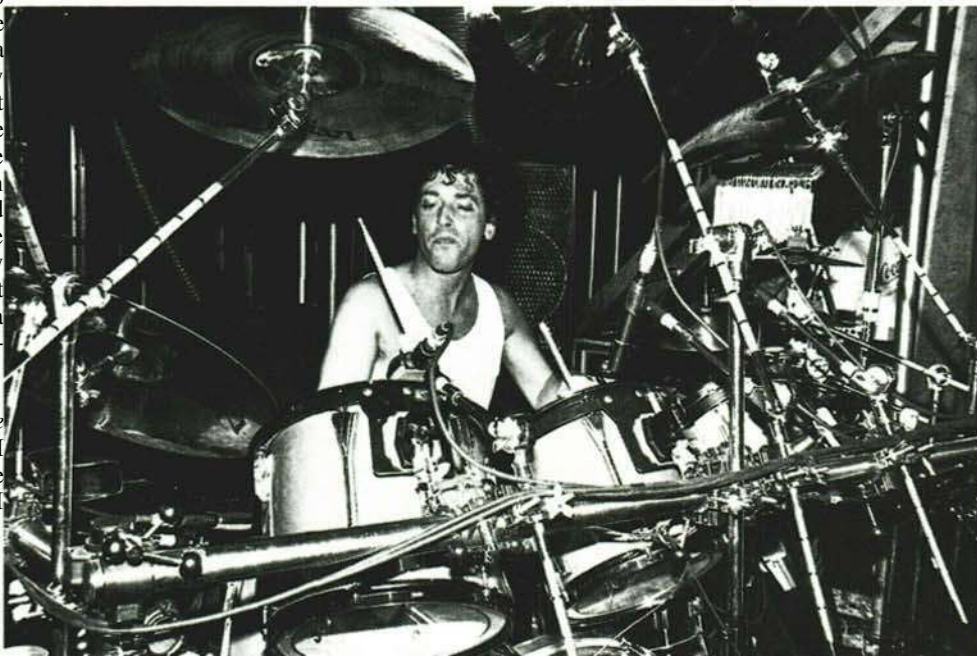
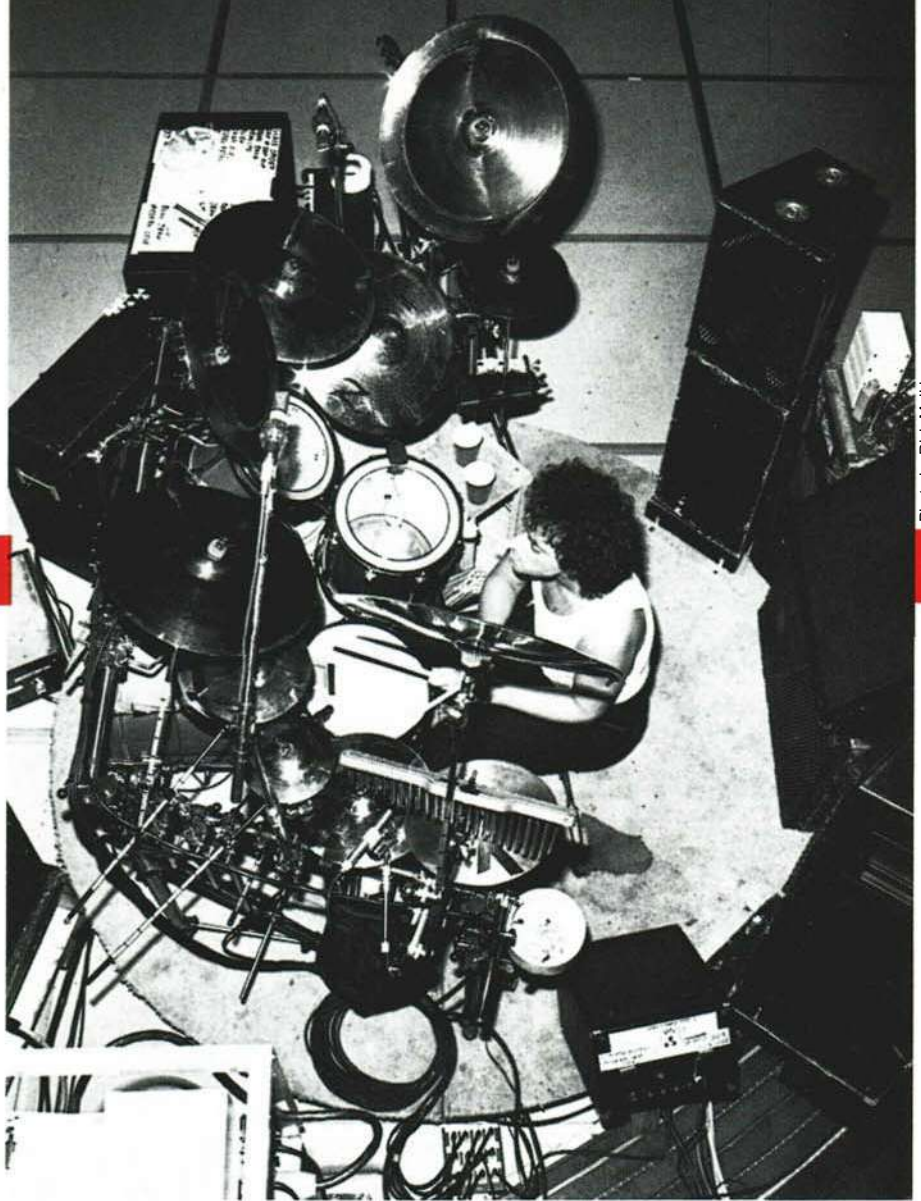


Photo by Rick Malkin



different bands at clubs. Once in a while, someone from one of these bands would get a session and ask me to play.

RF: Anything monumental from that period that we should know about?

AC: No. Although the Bullseye album, which you can get as a cutout somewhere for a quarter, was interesting. There were some interesting things, like a song called "Seventh Heaven" that was like Chuck Berry rock 'n' roll, but it was in seven.

RF: So you were willing to be part of a band again?

AC: I was willing to try again, especially since there was money involved this time.

RF: How did you get the offer?

AC: These fellows heard of me through someone else and called me. I went down and played with them, and went to a great studio in Canada to do the album, so it was nice treatment and good playing.

RF: What would you consider your big break?

AC: John Waite's gig, because I was seen for the first time. That was in 1984.

RF: How did you get that?

AC: I met Carmine [Rojas, bassist], who lived in Germany when I was doing the Electra V album there. He was part of the Nona Hendryx clique and knew Eddie Martinez, who I had also done demos with. When I met Carmine, I was playing pool during a break, and I heard someone speaking English. I looked at the guy and said, "From America?" He said, "Yeah, New York." We introduced ourselves, and he asked, "Are you the Alan Childs that played on Eddie Martinez's demos? I've heard so much about you, and I heard the demo. It's a pleasure to meet you, but I thought you were black." We had heard of each other, but we had never met. We kept in touch, and when he came back from the Bowie tour in '83, John Waite called him and asked him if he knew of any drummers he would like to play with. Carmine told John to give me a call, and that was it. I

went down and auditioned.

RF: What was the audition like?

AC: They told me to learn some songs from the Babys albums and John's new album, which at the time was *Missing You*. I learned five songs, went down to the rehearsal studio, played the songs, and kept my fingers crossed. It felt good. That was around 3:00. I got home at 7:00, and there was a message on my machine from Carmine saying, "Learn the rest of the album." That was the beginning of my being seen and heard by a lot more people.

RF: What did you like about that music?

AC: It was right up my alley musically. My roots are really British rock, starting with the Beatles, going on to Cream and Jimi Hendrix, who was American, but came out of England, and Humble Pie with Peter Frampton. That whole era was the most important influence on my playing, and John Waite's music shared that.

RF: What was required of you as a player?

AC: Playing that was solid, tasty, and that fit that style, which not everyone can do. Some drummers have a different style—a

different feel—but I seemed to fit right into that British rock style.

RF: You got to do one of the records.

AC: I did some of his next record, *Mask of Smiles*. I was supposed to do the whole record, but that's when I got called for Julian. We had been given a time when we were going to end, so I assumed we would be finished on that date, and I could go on and do whatever I had to do. But we were behind schedule, so I had to tell John I was leaving because I had told Julian I would do his tour. It was a little weird, but recently I saw John, and everything is fine. It was terrible at the time, though. Those things are never easy. Both Carmine and I were actually doing two albums and rehearsing with Julian at the same time. I was doing John from midnight to 6:00 in the morning, and then I was going to New Jersey to do the Steve Taylor album. He's a Christian rock artist, but a rebel in that world, and kind of like David Bowie. It was a great album. After Steve, we'd start rehearsals with Julian, so it was actually around-the-clock for almost two weeks. I'm not complaining about it,

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"There is no easy way to describe the actual work done in this downtown scene. And any way that we describe it—"noise art" or noise funk or noise music—is just a shortcut to a category and really doesn't give any information. Only the sound can give that information. Because what we are dealing with here are ways of organizing sound and rhythm that are not the clear paths that everyone has come to know."

—David Moss

by Bill Milkowski

Photos by Aldo Mauro



TOWN OZEN





David Moss

concept of luxury co-ops or opulent rentals came along to drive lower-income folks to the other boroughs and beyond. Rents were still relatively cheap. Musicians were able to scrape up their monthly dues and have plenty of time left over to do their thing. And there were plenty of venues around to play in. It was a good time to be an improvising artist in New York City.

Today the term "Downtown" refers not so much to a place as to a state of mind. Many of those same pioneers remain on the scene in the lower regions of Manhattan, but others have flown the coop and are thriving in places like Vermont, Alabama, New Mexico, and North Carolina. They're still experimenting, but now their venues are in places like Germany, Holland, Japan, Switzerland, and all points between. They've maintained a philosophy and spread it around the world, though they're still often referred to as Downtown musicians.

Modern Drummer decided to take a look at this alternative scene, focusing on the drummers. Here, then, is the Downtown Dozen.

David Moss is generally regarded as the Godfather of the Downtown scene. The elder statesman of this loosely-knit community of drummers, he's been actively experimenting on the kit since 1971. Born in Middletown, Long Island in 1949, David moved with his family to the Hartford, Connecticut area when he was 12.

David recalls that magic day when he found his first set of drums: "In the process of our move to Connecticut we started unpacking all the boxes, and we found this old wooden crate that no one knew anything about. We opened it and found inside an old set of Ludwig drums, which my father had bought in 1928. He played it up until the time he went into the Army in 1940. Then he packed them away, and that was the end of that. He never told us that he played drums at all; no one had any idea.

"So here it was 1962, some 22 years after he had packed them away. I just fell in love with this set. It had a big 26" bass drum, a really deep 14" snare, and these cymbals that were so thin they

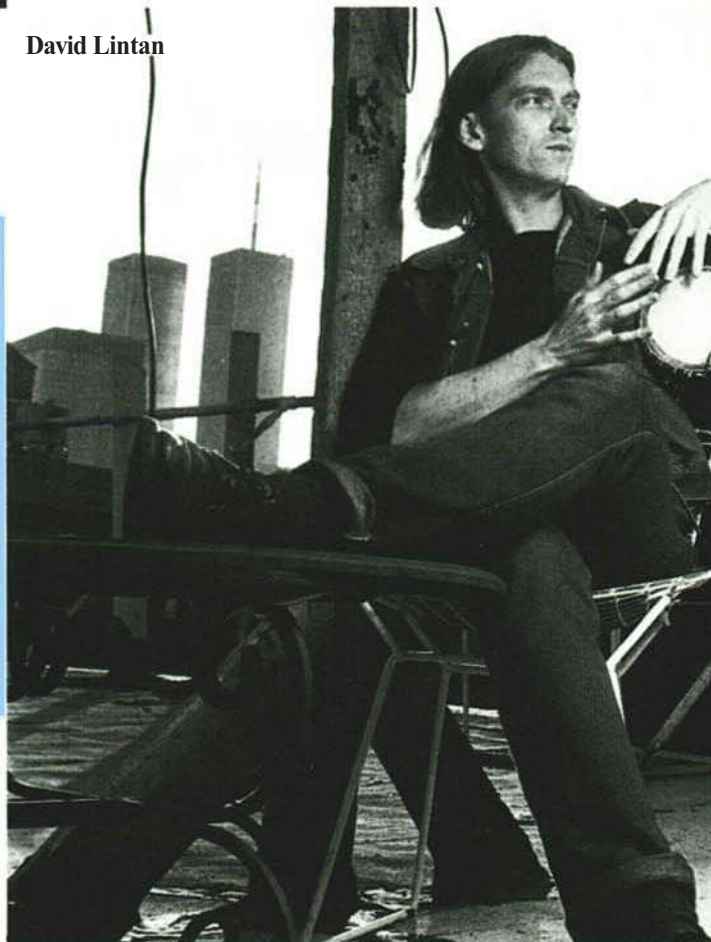
They are musical renegades. They come from the Midwest, the West Coast, the New England states, and as far away as Japan and Ireland. But at some point in their musical evolution they gravitated to New York City, where the frantic energy inspired them, and the high tolerance for things weird bolstered their confidence.

Maybe they started out as rock drummers in cover bands or as jazz drummers in straight-ahead settings. Maybe they played in their high school big band or had some adventurous ensemble that was just beginning to scrape the tip of the iceberg. But somewhere along the way they freaked out. They took it way beyond the standard 4/4 rock backbeat or the conventional ding ding-ding-ding ride-cymbal action of the jazz drummer. They began experimenting. They got wild ideas. They began taking it all the way out. The sky was the limit.

Maybe the spark was first lit by Mitch Mitchell's ambitious work with the Jimi Hendrix Experience ("Fire," "Third Stone From The Sun," or "If 6 Was 9"). Maybe that led to Elvin Jones and his polyrhythmic, independent-limbed excursions on the kit. But they didn't stop there. They went on to Milford Graves and his revolutionary approach with both Cecil Taylor and Albert Ayler. Maybe they got into Harry Partch and began building their own instruments to fit their personal approaches to rhythm. And eventually they began inspiring each other, pushing each other to bolder, weirder modes of expression.

By the late '70s, there was a kind of Downtown renaissance happening in New York City. Improvisors like saxophonist John Zorn, guitarist Fred Frith, bassist Bill Laswell, and others began building a scene, and it happened to be located below 14th Street in that netherworld known as Downtown. SoHo was not yet the thriving, chic environ that it is today. The Lower East Side was barely inhabitable, and the East Village had not yet been plundered by real estate speculators. The artists lived in these unclaimed regions—painters, sculptors, dancers, and the whole community of improvising musicians. This was long before the

David Lintan





were like paper. My father set it up for me and my two younger brothers in the basement, showed us how to hold the sticks, and we all started playing on it along with my father's Louis Armstrong Hot Five and Hot Seven records. That was the stuff I started learning how to play the drums to."

Moss gravitated toward jazz drumming while attending Trinity College. Elvin Jones was his hero in those years. "I was a pale Elvin imitator. I had that triplet feeling down—that whole wash-of-sound approach. I loved Elvin's playing, but I realized it was impossible to play like that. No one's ever played like Elvin. I mean, that was *him*. Elvin Jones exemplified the problem for a musician: Here was a man who had built up, almost from nowhere, a complete style that people were trying to copy, and the fact was that no one else ever really would."

"Right around the time I began realizing how futile it was to try to copy Elvin, along came Milford Graves and Rashied Ali. And at the same time I began listening to contemporary classical composers like Varese, Penderecki, and Stockhausen to turn my head around. I distinctly recall the first time I heard Varese's "Ionization." There were 13 percussionists playing this piece, but I didn't know anything about that. I thought it was just one person, and I said to myself, 'Wow! One person can do all *that*!' That gave me the idea of what a soloist could do. I began trying to incorporate some of these ideas and concepts into my playing with other musicians, but they all just said, 'Forget it. Bye!' They didn't want to deal with this area that I was exploring. It had nothing to do with what they thought of as improvising music—you know, rooted in jazz."

Moss eventually found a playing partner and key mentor in avant garde trumpeter Bill Dixon, who was in residence at Bennington College when David sought him out. "I had heard through the network that he needed a percussionist, so I went to Bennington, auditioned, and got the gig. I was his drummer for two years, and he was a perfect continuation of the area that I was going

toward. He began to tell me things like, 'A drummer can do anything. Why do you play with drumsticks? Take two knitting needles. Why do your cymbals always sound like this? Why are you always playing these same patterns? Why is your lowest drum on the right side of your knee?' And these were key questions for me—the idea that I was playing patterns that I had no control over, that were predetermined by some tradition, that I had been taught as a kid how to play. He got me to break all my habits—habits of sticking, of technique, of drum placement, and habits of the drumset in general that were totally ingrained. I had no concept that this was something I should be dealing with, and Bill opened up my thoughts to these possibilities. So the time I was with him, from 1972 to 1974, was a real turning point for me."

Moss took Bill Dixon's words to heart and began doing weird things to his kit. He'd tie sweat pants around the cymbals to mute them. He'd place metal objects on the drumheads. He'd bend his cymbals in U-formations to get different colors out of them. He'd move his drums into unorthodox arrangements. He'd put cloth over his snare drum and wrap his sticks in plastic—anything to thwart his technique and pervert what he had learned over the years of institutionalized training.

"Eventually, I evolved into an object-soundmaker rather than a drummer, and that was our splitting point, because Bill wanted a drummer. Despite his ideas, Bill still had his roots in a certain type of jazz framework, which he will acknowledge. He loves Duke Ellington; Duke's his man. But I began to go further. So we had a natural split at that point."

Moss began woodshedding with these new ideas, and later in 1974 got his first opportunity to perform a solo concert. "At that point I was beginning to establish the kind of music I wanted to play, the kind of sounds I wanted to make, the way I wanted to structure time, and what kinds of rhythmic events and combinations I wanted to deal with as a percussionist. And once I began stating my own feeling, my own shape as a musician, I began to meet like-minded people. This was '75-76, around the time that





Mark Miller

the whole Zorn/Frith crowd was happening in New York. That was the beginning of this period of interchange among all these like-minded musicians in New York, playing together in duos and trios and quartets and whatever. We were all clearly dealing with improvisation as an unnotative structure—not jazz, not classical, not rock, but some combination of concepts from all those forms."

By this time, Moss's set of Sonor drums had been drastically altered for performance situations. He placed woodblocks, metal pieces, plastic chunks, sheets of mylar—anything he could find he would attach to the drum surfaces. And there was a method to his madness.

"I began to add all these objects to my set that would distinguish my sound. Basically, I turned these drums into holders for objects, with maybe four or five objects on each drum. Most drummers have a snare, two toms, a floor tom, two cymbals, and a hi-hat: seven surfaces that they can hit. Figure out how fast they can play those seven surfaces and how many sounds they can get. Let's say they can play those seven surfaces in 2.2 seconds. That becomes the high parameter of their speed. Now, by placing objects on each drum, suddenly I have seven surfaces with 30 or more possible sounds available to me. And I keep everything close to me so I can play with my fingers and with sticks, and make these fast-changing sounds. I can make intricate patterns and make the rhythmic patterns change very quickly without having to move. And I've muted all my cymbals to get that quick attack because I'm interested in sharp sounds. A cymbal with sustain is a unit of time in a drummer's vocabulary, and it's much too slow for me. I need to make fast transitions from one sound to another. And this is a point of philosophy that I differ from most drummers on."

Around this same time, Moss also began experimenting with the use of his voice as a percussive element. In trying to mimic the skittish, chaotic sound of his drumming phrases, he came up

with some otherworldly results. As he explains, it all began quite innocently. "I had been forging my own way on drums, but I was still somewhat frustrated because I couldn't really come out with a soaring melodic statement of some kind. And since I had no technique on keyboard or other instruments, I started to sing.

"I began noticing that, as I played, I was holding my breath and pushing out a phrase. And when you're playing a lot and holding your breath a lot, all of a sudden you don't have enough oxygen in your body. I found that, when I was performing, my fingers would tingle or become numb. Eventually, if I was playing long enough, I wouldn't have enough strength in these numb fingers to hold a stick. If I hit the rim by accident my stick would go flying out of my hand. So I thought, 'This is not correct. There's something wrong with this technique.'

"The only way I could figure out how to change it was to sing a drone sound very quietly, so that no one could hear it—'hummmmmmm'—but so that I still knew I was breathing. And it was an important change for me, really kind of revolutionary. It made me feel more physically linked to my instrument. But then I thought, 'What if I drone a little louder—HUMMMMMMM. Hey, that's nice! Now I've got two sounds—kind of a textural thing. Let's see, what if I try to imitate these fast strokes, make different combinations of sound.' And all of a sudden there was something interesting to explore that was coming out of a solo framework.

"I began making my voice into a melodic element, a rhythmic element, an attack element and—this is key—an element of surprise. In a sense, I had made myself into two people; I could be a drummer, or I could be a singer. I could use my voice to surprise and add to my drumming self, or I could use my drumming-rhythmic momentum to bring out vocal sounds at different points. Each mode of sound could inform, surprise, attack, and change the other. This was really important to me, so I began to work at it."

Moss started off vocally imitating every sound he could make with his hands or with sticks. He began developing pseudo-languages and eventually added a headset microphone to his



Peter Zeldman



Katie O'Looney

burgeoning collection of touring gear. "I began to interweave the vocal sounds with the drumming sounds so successfully that sometimes you wouldn't know, unless you could see my mouth, which was doing which."

This unusual technique of percussive vocalizing became Moss's calling card around the Downtown scene. And it went over especially well overseas in places like East Germany and Japan. "I found the German audiences to be completely ecstatic, absolutely energetic about this music, maybe because it was somewhat new to them. We had our cult audience in New York, but after a while the improvising musicians on the Downtown scene found that we weren't dealing with a fresh crowd of people anymore. The New York audience became jaded, in a sense. But these Germans I played for were screaming—totally into it. And they were especially interested in my vocal stuff, which hadn't gotten much positive feedback in New York."

"I played solo for the first time in East Germany two years ago, and the reaction was unbelievable. The audience was breathing with me on every step, singing back, hanging on every sound. And after a concert they were all crowding around, asking a hundred questions about the philosophy behind all this—things that never get talked about in America. My whole experience in New York is that no one wants to talk about anything. The audiences are too hip, too cool to ask anything, and the musicians just want to get paid and split. No one wants to share information here, but it's very different overseas."

A few years ago, Moss took it upon himself to share information about the New Music or Downtown Music with others. He went into a recording studio and cut three-minute segments he called Sound Spots, which had a generic sound intro followed by a 30-second script explaining the music, followed by a two-minute example, and then the sound logo to finish. He made ten of these Sound Spots and pitched them as filler items to National Public Radio. They bought the concept and asked for more. Moss then

commissioned several of his Downtown friends (Arlo Lindsay, John Zorn, Fred Frith, among others) to put together two-minute pieces of music, around which he would wrap the Sound Spot sound logo and add 30 seconds of script introducing the artist. He packaged 25 of the spots and shipped them off to NPR. The concept was taking off.

"Originally," says Moss, "I felt that it was important to have media outlets, not only for my music, but for this whole crew of people who play this type of music. My whole idea was to get this music on the radio outside of New York because it would mean better things for all of us. It would mean recognition beyond that cult audience of New York, for one thing. If people heard this stuff on the radio in Oshkosh or Minneapolis, maybe they would come to a concert or even send away for records from New Music Distribution [the main source of Downtown Music in the States]. So it was a kind of outreach program for this music, and it seems to have caught on in different areas around the country."

Last year, Moss and his partner, Frank Hoffman, received a \$210,000 grant from the Corporation For Public Broadcasting to expand the concept of Sound Spots into a weekly half-hour program. Today the new show, called *U.S. Ear: The New Music Review*, is heard on 85 stations in the NPR network. "Good information is given out on this program," says Moss. "There isn't another show on the radio like it."

Aside from his duties as coproducer of *U.S. Ear*, Moss continues to perform solo here and abroad, and in duo contexts with friends like cellist Tom Cora, guitarist Fred Frith, or turntable wizard Christian Marclay. A live album of a recent tour of Japan with Marclay will be out soon, available through New Music Distribution. Moss also continues to tour and record with his Dense Band, a more structured, song-oriented setting that includes Marclay on turntables, Wayne Horvitz on keyboards, and Jean Chaine on bass. And, in yet another project, he performs in Europe with Direct Sound, an experimental vocal quartet featuring Phil Minton, Anna Homier, and Carlos Santos. The Godfather of the



Jim Mussen



Yuval Gabay

Downtown scene is a busy man indeed.

David Linton went through the requisite rock bands in Newburgh, New York before coming to the Apple in 1979. He immediately hooked up with Downtown renegades like Jules Baptiste, Rhys Chatham, and Glenn Branca, providing the all-important pulse behind their minimalist noise experiments. Over the course of the next few years he interacted with Downtown mavens like Elliott Sharp and Fred Frith, and also had a stint in a synth-pop-thrash band called Interference, which had its eyes on a major-label record deal. Frustrated, Linton gave up the notion of playing in bands and turned his energies toward solo performance.

"I began to feel," says Linton, "that bands were just perpetually going to be this same routine of intensive work for a short period of time and then the eventual breakup. That's just the way it was, so I thought I would try to do solos. And at my first performance I got some encouraging reviews from one of the Downtown papers. That's when I knew I was on to something."

At that maiden solo performance, held at a place called The Bowery Project, Linton played drums, homemade instruments, and tapes, creating dense, percussive textures. "It was a really primitive setup by today's standards," he recalls, "but it had a performance aspect that I thought worked well. I played four separate parts, recorded each one live on four different cassette players, and then for the final section I just ran all the cassettes back in wild sync. So, during the course of a 25-minute performance, you saw the four solos individually and then superimposed at the end. And that was the groundwork for something I began developing."

That led Linton to making the four separate tracks of tape triggerable from the drumkit, an idea that he developed over the next three or four years. "This was long before any MIDI stuff," he says. "I was working crudely, not with a multi-track tape machine, but with four separate cassette decks, all with relatively wild sounds recorded on them, keyed off of the four main drums

through the use of contact microphones and noise gates. It was crude, but in some ways preferable to sampling, because the information is there, the tape is running, and each time that you hit a drum and trigger a tape, you get a slightly different selection from the previous hit. It's not like a sampler, where each trigger gives you the same preprogrammed sound each time. This method was a little more open-ended, with more left to chance. So in that respect it was a more personalized approach."

One tape might contain guitar textures, another might be a bass track, another might have odd percussion sounds, and the fourth might have melodic strains from Linton's old Farfisa organ. And he would trigger any or all of these prerecorded cassettes from his drumset.

Linton continues to work in this way for live solo performances, but he's added Roland *Octapads* to his setup. "The whole MIDI thing has made my four-deck setup seem rather outdated," he admits, "but in some ways I like it better because it's not something that everybody else is doing. I wouldn't expect a lot of other drummers to want to go through the hassle of doing it, but it's still fairly satisfying for me."

Within the past few years, Linton has been doing commission work for choreographers like Karole Armitage and David Parsons. For these jobs he utilizes an Atari *ST-1040* computer with a Steinberger 24-track sequencer, and the Roland *Octapads* triggering a Casio *CZ-10J*, a Yamaha *TX81Z*, or an Akai *S-900* sampler.

"The samples were made off of contact mic' percussion stuff: silverware hitting metal bowls, homemade instruments with piano strings stretched across slabs of wood, a lap steel guitar with a stick stuck under the bridge, and other weird instruments with contact mic's placed on them and fed through a pre-amp. I use the *Octapads* for keyboard legato stuff, and I use the Atari strictly for sequencing."

Linton continues to work with Downtown composer Elliott Sharp (he recently appeared in Sharp's premiere of *Larynx* at the Brooklyn Academy Of Music's [BAM] Next Wave Festival), and

Kumiko Kimoto



Takashi Kazamaki



soon began performing solo concerts around Boston. For a period of four years he worked with a free-jazz band called Ensemble Garuda. Then, in 1984, he decided to move to New York City and tap into the Downtown scene.

"Shortly before I moved to New York I did a double bill in Boston with the John Zorn/Fred Frith duo. At that gig, Zorn invited me to come to town and perform in his "Track & Field" piece at the Kool Jazz Festival. Soon after coming to town for that, I formed a trio with Ned Rothenberg and Elliott Sharp, began doing separate sessions with people like George Cartwright and Tom Cora, and then did more gigs with Zorn."

The band Boshō began as a percussion trio with Bennett, Kumiko Kimoto, and Yuval Gabay. Since forming, they've added guitarists Han Rowe and Davey Williams for a thrashing good sound. In both Semantics and Boshō, Bennett utilizes some of the polyrhythmic teachings he picked up from Sidney Smart in Boston and from his travels in Nigeria, where he studied traditional African drumming in 1981.

More recently, he's added MIDI equipment to his setup. He has two sets of Roland *Octapads*, one triggering a Casio *CZ-J01* and the other triggering a Korg *DDD-1* drum machine. He has three toms—a Tama, a Remo RotoTom, and a Belgian Sonorous tom. He rarely works with cymbals. His feet activate two DW *EP-1* pedals with electronic triggers that send signals to either a Boss *Dr. Pads* unit, or to the audio input of his Korg *DDD-1*. This setup is fairly compact, which allows Bennett to travel light on solo trips to Tokyo, Amsterdam, West Germany, and throughout Canada and the States. Along with David Linton, he is doing some of the most ambitious work in the field of MIDI among all the Downtown drummers.

Charles K. Noyes has so far only used MIDI for his soundtrack work. In performance around town as a solo artist, in duos with trumpeter Leslie Delaba, as a member of Elliott Sharp's large ensembles (he recently appeared in *Larynx* with fellow drummers

continued on page 90

he also plays in a trio with Christian Marclay and Wayne Horvitz. Aside from his latest commissioned score for choreographer David Parsons, he's working on a record of his own. "It's going to have a strong MIDI base," says Linton, "and then I'll invite various people, track by track, to play on top of it." Linton's next solo appearance at a major New York venue will be this spring at The Kitchen.

Samin Bennett is another of the Downtown crew who is getting into MIDI in a big way. A ubiquitous figure on the scene, Bennett can be seen around New York with Boshō, an adventurous, raucous, ethnic-rock outfit featuring three drummers and two guitarists; with the wildly irreverent Semantics, featuring saxophonist Ned Rothenberg and guitarist Elliott Sharp; and in various solo and duo contexts at experimental venues around Manhattan.

Born in Birmingham, Alabama, Bennett began experimenting with polyrhythms before he knew what it all meant. "There were no alternative record stores in Birmingham," says Bennett. "I didn't even know who the Art Ensemble Of Chicago was. As far as jazz went, you could find these CTI records and that was about it."

Nevertheless, Bennett began banging on automotive springs and putting together enormous sound sculptures. "And I didn't know from John Cage or Harry Partch at all, so it was purely intuitive."

In 1976, at age 20, he decided to leave the South and settled in Boston. There he began meeting kindred spirits and found an important mentor in Sidney Smart, the free-jazz drummer who had played with Sam Rivers during the '70s. "The first time I went to see him perform, I was amazed. He had this setup that looked a lot like the one I had thrown together down in Birmingham, although he had a lot more under his belt in terms of the whole multi-limb independent aspect of playing. So I was immediately drawn to that and started studying with him."

Bennett attended a weekly drum workshop led by Smart and

Ikoue Mori



Drummers Collective recently celebrated its anniversary, marking ten years of operating as New York City's only "vocational school" for drummers. Founded in 1978 by Rick Kravetz, the school has undergone many changes in the past ten years. For instance, within three years, directorship had passed over to Rob Wallis and Paul Siegel. Three years ago, the school moved from its original location above 42nd Street to larger facilities on the Avenue of The Americas (or Sixth Avenue, if you're a die-hard New Yorker). Sponsorships, a video production/distribution operation, and other factors have added to the school's multi-faceted operation. But through it all, the main thing that Drummers Collective has had to offer has been a single, all-pervasive attitude: It is a school for drummers, run by drummers, with classes taught by drummers.

MD has received numerous requests from across the country to present information on just what Drummers Collective is all about, and what the school has to offer. To obtain that information, we went to the source: its directors and teachers. In this roundtable discussion, we talked with School Directors Rob Wallis and Paul Siegel, Administrative Director Brad Flickinger, and teachers Mike Clark, Pete Zeldman, Hank Jaramillo, Frank Malabe, Rod Morgenstein, and Kim Plainfield.

RVH: How do you describe the teaching philosophy of Drummers Collective—why you put this school together and what is it you hope to give to the students who come here?

Wallis: I think the key to our philosophy is flexibility. Whatever path a student wants to go down as a musician playing drums is available. There's such a diversity of talent among our instructors, both as teachers and players, that students can really learn and go with it wherever they want. Another important part of our job is staying current, so that as new things evolve, such as electronics or new styles that drummers are developing, we can make them available to our students.

Clark: The Collective, to me, is a place for drummers. It's a serious alternative to the kind of lessons I took in my day. When I was coming up, I sat next to a teacher while he went through the boring 1 e &, 2 e & things. He had no idea about my dreams, and I wasn't able to talk about concepts or time or how I wanted to present what it was that I did. It was like, "Learn the rudiments, learn to read, and I'll see you later." Here, there are two or more drumsets in just about every room, and some of the greatest drummers in the world are teaching. I even study with some of the drummers here. I love to teach. I feel like I'm playing when I'm

teaching, because I'm actually trying to transmit what I know—what it is my life experience has been from a drummer's standpoint—to the student. I can talk about conceptual things that are really important to me. It's not about, "Okay, let's play this groove or this beat." Sometimes we sit down and just blow. The students are great, too. They really want to play.

Zeldman: It's a very relaxed atmosphere rather than a conser-

vative one. Usually, when students walk in, they're really nervous. I think the first thing that's necessary when teaching people is to put them at ease, tell them that it's okay if they make some mistakes, and allow them to be themselves in order to bring out whatever originality they have. Obviously, they can't bypass the important basics of drumming. For example, if they're holding a stick pointing toward the ground, that's going to be an unbelievable barrier to get over. In other words, we have to guide our students, but it's not so strict that they feel intimidated.

DRUMMERS

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by Rick Van Horn

RVH: Do you have any particular goal in terms of what type of drummer you're hoping to turn out?

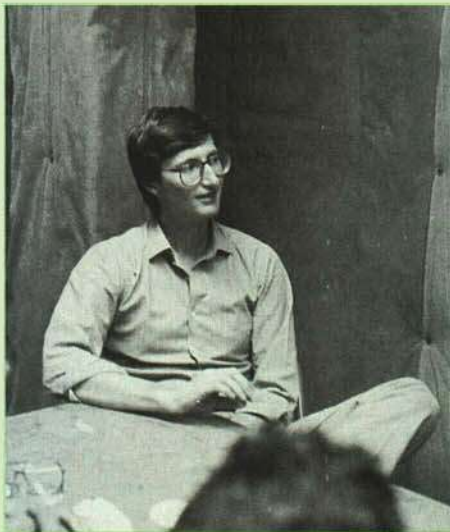
Wallis: We have absolutely no preconceived role model. By the time drummers have really used Drummers Collective to its fullest, they'll have studied with many of our different instructors. As long as they can go out and keep good time—and hopefully read—it doesn't matter whether they start doing Broadway gigs, play weddings and bar mitzvahs, or become the next studio sensation. We will have done our job if we exposed them to a lot of different styles and taught them a little bit about how those styles have evolved to what's happening on today's scene. Where they go with it from there is really up to them. I'm not into having people play in a predetermined way in order to say that they graduated from Drummers Collective.

Siegel: The key to it is what *they're* looking for. Whether they want to play drums as a hobby or to become a professional, we'd like to help them accomplish what they want to accomplish.

RVH: But doesn't any educational institution have an obligation to provide a certain amount of guidance or direction? What happens when somebody comes in and says, "I want to be the next Steve Gadd," but doesn't have that type of talent—although he or she might be a dynamite rock 'n' roll drummer?

Flickinger: I'm a former student of the school myself. I studied here for five or six years. I personally interview the new students who come in. One of the things that I like to do is go into a room with them, play a little bit, and really find out what their main interests are. By hearing them play, I also get to hear things that maybe they need to work on. And because I studied with almost all the instructors up here, I can say, "If you want to work on chart reading, the guy to study with is Hank Jaramillo; if you want to work on Latin fusion, go see Kim Plainfield." So they're not going without guidance. We also have specific programs. Our ten-week certificate program is a very structured thing. But beyond that, we have a very flexible curriculum, so that our students needn't feel as though studying here will make them come out in any kind of preconceived way.

Wallis: We try to place as many different elements of drumming



Paul Siegel

as possible within someone's reach. You can't force someone to take advantage of the knowledge that's here. But our responsibility is to make it available, make sure people know about it, and encourage them. Our teachers do a lot of "guiding," themselves.

For example, after Hank has taken his students through his own studio-drumming program, he might recommend that they work on chops—and send them to Kim, Pete, or Rod. All of our teachers bring certain specialties with them; that's part of the reason that they're here.

RVH: That specialization is one

ing a bunch of information.

RVH: We've been bandying about the term "professional" here. We've been talking about the "professional" teachers who come in, and you've described putting the students into a "professional" situation. I'd like to get everybody's perspective on what constitutes a "professional drummer" today. We've received inquiries at *MD* saying, "I've heard about Drummers Collective. I've seen their ads and their videos. But it sounds like everybody who's there is going to be turned into a New York studio drummer. I don't want to be the next Steve Gadd or Dave Weckl. I want to play my thing." How do you define what today's professional drummer needs to be or needs to know?

Wallis: I don't equate "professional" with any one particular gig or style. To me, a "professional" drummer is someone who makes or supplements his or her living by playing drums—someone who's talented enough to get out there and get paid to play.

Malabe: Here in New York City, being a "professional" means that you really have to learn every type of music that's *played* here in New York. I teach a class in how to play hand percussion parts on drums. People who take my class sometimes ask, "Why do I have to know this?" Well, Latin rhythms are very big right now. They even have them in country & western music. If you get called upon to do a merengue or songo or guaguanco, you need the knowledge of those rhythms to work with. You may be a good drummer, but if you don't know a certain Latin thing, people are going to say,

"Well, let's get this other guy. He's not as good, but he knows a little bit more."

In this school, we're all "professionals" because we go out and work; we don't only teach. Hank and I are like the old warhorses here. We're still doing it because we *enjoy* doing it. It keeps me young and makes me very active. In some colleges, the teachers have been there 20 or 30 years. They teach from 9:00 to 5:00, and then they go home and watch the news. They don't go out and play.

I also want to be a friend to my students—not just a teacher who won't say hello on the street. Students who study here have confidence in the teachers. They know we won't steer them wrong. If we can't answer their questions, we'll seek out someone who can. I'll ask Kim Plainfield about something, or Kim will ask me. We like working together.

Jaramillo: Just going back to the "professional" thing, when students come to Drummers Collective, they're going to study all the different facets that are available to them. But what they'll use in an actual job situation—who knows? They're really going to use whatever they can to get them through it. As professional drummers, we're not going to use everything we've ever learned; we're usually going to end up working at what we do best. I'm 57 years old, and I've been playing for 37 years. I've played jazz, studio stuff, shows, and just about every musical style—



Rob Wallis

2nd William F. Miller

STABLE

of the unique features of Drummers Collective. You offer what is, in essence, a professional core program as opposed to a generalized academic one. But there are other aspects of music education besides literally sitting down and playing, such as ear training, theory, and things of that nature. Could some of your students be missing training that they might ultimately need, or are those subjects available here, too?

Wallis: We do have a theory and ear-training course, but we don't have college-style academic courses like composition or the history of jazz. I consider Drummers Collective more of a vocational school where learning is really hands-on. Part of the method is to have students playing drums in front of professionals and learning that way, rather than just watching stuff on a blackboard. It's very practical. Our teachers are the players who are out there doing gigs. Hank will leave his lesson and go do *A Chorus Line*; Kim will leave his lesson and go to Europe to play with Tania Maria. Our instructors are working musicians, and they bring their experience into their lessons.

Siegel: There's also the fact that we're in New York City, which I think makes a big difference. That's made it possible for us to have the teachers that we have. It also means that a person who comes here to study can walk ten minutes downtown and be amongst the best jazz clubs in the world.

Jaramillo: Regarding formal training, I went to Manhattan School of Music for a year, and I had extensive formal training before that. I've found that one can use *some* of that ear-training, harmony instruction, and so on to a slight degree in professional playing. But there isn't a *great deal* of use for it specifically on jobs themselves. I've found that I learn more from actually just going out and *doing*—like throwing yourself in the ocean to learn how to swim. So when students come to me, I give them an opportunity to be in the hot seat. I give them a chart, whether they can read it or not, and just let them get through it by listening. Often they find that, even if they read well, they still have a lot of trouble. My point is that a good music education is not all formal training. Students need to experience some part of the professional music *business* in their training, rather than just absorb-



Pete Zeldman

including Latin, to a certain extent. Naturally, I can't do everything as well as each "specialist" here in the room, although I'm still trying to learn. At the same time, being able to do all these *different* things and to keep studying—even at my age—has enabled me to *stay* in the business.

More important than anything, I feel that students should

not be afraid of throwing themselves into music and having faith in it. They'll come out working a lot more that way, rather than by making a grab for only one thing that they "really want." When people are forced to drive a cab or work at a candy store just to keep some money coming in, that keeps them away from the music business.

Wallis: The more elements of drumming and stylistic things that you can handle, the better shot you have at working. It's difficult enough to make a living playing the drums, but if you have never explored Latin music or have never gotten your chart reading together, it's even *more* difficult. If you get a call to do a certain job, you might have to turn it down. Why limit yourself? We try to present all those aspects, so that our students have a better shot at trying to make a living out there.

Another aspect of professionalism is confidence. The better prepared you are for any situation, the better job you'll do. You'll be more *professional* at handling it, because you'll have more confidence in yourself. I think the best approach for people coming to this school would be to say, "I want to learn at least a little bit of everything, so I can really have a base. Once I have that, I can get deeper into the areas that I really enjoy and love playing." In that way they can always feel at least somewhat confident and comfortable accepting any gig. Even if they're not going to tear it up, they're going to feel they can get by it and have enough musicality to do a good job.

Siegel: If there's anything we would like our "graduates" to take with them when they leave, it's musicality. We'd like them to be *musical players*, not necessarily to be able to play in every conceivable time signature or read a chart that's a hundred feet long. One of our basic philosophies is to make our students understand that a drummer has to be supportive, play sensitively, and perform the fundamental job of any musician.

Wallis: We know that not everybody is into studio or show drumming. There are a lot of drummers out there who want to be the drummer in the next Motley Crue. If that's what they want, they're

time and gets into the next heavy metal sensation. There's nothing wrong with that. I don't feel that it's up to us to force someone to learn how to play swing time or Latin. We *encourage* it; that is the key to what we do. But whether a drummer wants to learn how to play reggae or fusion in 7/8, we can accomplish that here with the wealth of information that all the teachers bring.

Morgenstein: I think a lot of drummers aren't aware of how many opportunities there are, in terms of club dates, jingles, TV movies, motion pictures, etc. Most of the students I meet want to make records and be on MTV right off the bat. But when we present them with all these options for making a living as a musician—which a lot of them have not even thought of—it's much easier to get them to check out all these different styles we've been talking about.

I gave a guy a few lessons here who was strictly into heavy metal; he didn't think anything else existed. One day, he brought in a tape and said, "Can you help me figure out this drumbeat?" It was Tommy Lee on the intro to a song. The part featured heavy double bass, but what was going on in the cymbal? A mambo! This was a perfect example of how elements can cross from one style

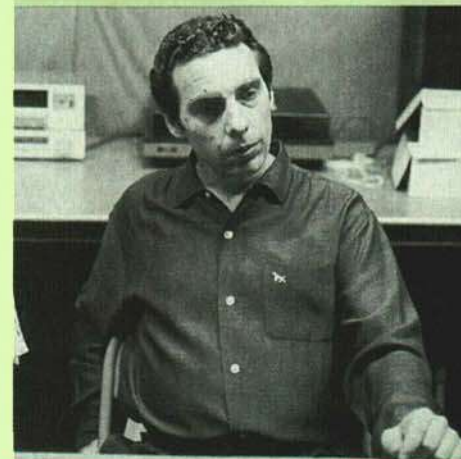
to another. All of a sudden, there was this Latin figure in the playing of his favorite heavy metal drummer. I sort of caught a little twinkle in his eye, like he was thinking, "Wow, this is amazing."

Siegel: It's important for young drummers to understand that many of the drummers who play in heavy metal bands have been very serious about learning to play. It's just a *style* of music, and a lot of those who play it are very accomplished.

Flickering: I'd like to expand on something that Mike mentioned. There's a real sense of camaraderie at Drummers Collective. When you've been here for an amount of time and have studied with several teachers, there are a lot of rhythms that get all mixed up inside your head. While you're striving to come out with something, you may sit down with another student who has already put some of this stuff in order, and the two of you may come out with something new. In addition to that, because we're not a college, the unwritten law that sometimes exists at colleges—that students and teachers are on different levels—doesn't really exist here. I think the students really appreciate that. They're not intimidated to go up and ask Rod Morgenstein about a rhythm.

WFM: So far, we've been discussing general teaching concepts. If I were somebody out in Michigan reading about the school, I'd like some more specifics about the programs here.

Wallis: We do have programs that students can follow if they want to work in a structured curriculum. Many people come here without a



Mike Clark



Brad Flickering



Rod Morgenstein

very specific stylistic goal in mind. They want to get a variety, but they don't know what, precisely, to study. So they say, "You take me and design something." We have a program that's set up for that. But we also have the flexibility where someone can take one course in that program and nothing else, or a private lesson and nothing else.

Siegel: That, too, is one of the key differences between this school and others. People can come here when they're in town for a day or two and take a couple of lessons with somebody. They can just as easily come for a week, a month, or four years. Things are set up to be flexible in order to fit the needs of individuals.

Wallis: Before each teacher here gets into his own thing, I'd just like to say that every class—whether it's an ensemble class or a master class with a major artist—is kept very small. The largest class would be about 12 people, and that's for a master class when someone special comes in. A very big percentage of what happens here is private lessons. We all feel that, in most cases, the one-to-one situation is the best learning environment. Of course, a group situation can also be a real good learning experience, but even our group classes are kept down to about five or six people.

Flickinger: Maybe I could give an overview of what some of the classes are. There are some ten-week courses that we offer. One of them is a studio drum workshop that Hank teaches. There's another class that Frankie Malabe is involved with that teaches Third World rhythms on drumset. There is a bass and drums workshop that Kim Plainfield is involved with. There is an electronic drum workshop that is all hands-on, including programming Simmons sets.

RVH: I'd like the teachers here to comment on what they do in each of their courses.

Malabe: The Third World rhythms and drumset class is basically Latin, Brazilian, and Caribbean rhythms applied to the drumset. Some of the traditional rhythms I use are the guaguanco and the rumba, but I also teach contemporary rhythms, like some of the songos from



Kim Plainfield

Cuba. But I also teach these rhythms to the students with a backbeat, so that they can relate more easily.

Young drumming students play on 2 and 4. I'll say, "You have that down. Now let's play on 1 and 3. Once you learn the rules, you can break them. But at least if someone asks you, 'Do you know how to play a rumba or guaguanco?' you can say, 'Yes, I know how to do that.' It's part of your language." This is good for the students. It gives them a better outlook on their drumming.

I try to keep the class real light, because students often have this attitude of, "Ten weeks! I've got to learn all this stuff in ten weeks!" That's totally impossible to do. So I just let them play and be themselves. Some of them come here and won't even get up and try it. I usually yank them out and say, "Come on, try it. If you want to make a mistake, make it here—not outside. Have some fun with it. Don't think of it as a school. There are no books in front of you. Nobody's watching you all the time."

I also talk about sound on the drumset—not so much on the cymbals, but on the drumset alone—and how you move to it. As you watch people who have played for many years, it seems very easy for them to do it. Yet you know that they have studied very hard. So I try to bring that into my classes.

In hand percussion, the stick is an extension of your hand. It

doesn't even have to be technically right. You hold it, and it's like you're playing with your hands. The students like that a lot. I'm really amazed that by the second class or so they realize it's a hard class, yet sometimes by the third class, they want more.

A lot of the good teachers are fading and a lot of good players do not want to be teachers, which is a pity. They feel that they shouldn't share what they've learned. I feel that that's so wrong, because you learn through another generation. You weren't born with a hi-hat, snare, and a bunch of sticks. You don't even get that when you're bar mitzvahed. [laughs] I try to promote a certain feeling so that drummers can be real relaxed in what they do. Be human beings, and just *like* each other. That's my philosophy.

RVH: Mike, how about your class?

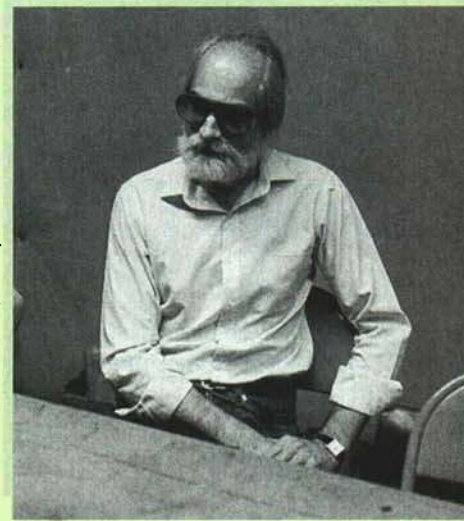
Clark: First of all, many of the people who come to my jazz ensemble class are already my private students, so we've talked about the music that we're going to play beforehand. But sometimes, students I've never seen before just come in. At any rate, when I do the jazz class, I try to bring in musicians who are really playing the music for a living—players who have done a lot of recording and have been around the world 80 times. I put the students into an actual playing situation with these pros. A while ago, we did a class with several top jazz players. Dannie Richmond came in—just walked in off the street—and ended up giving a lesson. I got a lesson from *him*, watching him conduct a class.

I try to talk about history—everything I know from Chick Webb until now. I suggest records that I feel represent the history of the music, so that the students can understand where it all came from. That way, when they really do play the music, it becomes a reality in their lives, not just from their minds.

We also discuss conceptual stuff—'50s, '60s, current music, even '40s big band—anything that I feel qualified to comment on. We talk about different ways of playing time, but we don't *just* talk. When questions come up, the students get to demonstrate what they're feeling on the instrument with the band. Then I can demonstrate an alternative way of looking at it. If they don't need that, and everything's fine the way they're playing, the truth of that will come out. We also talk about solos, including different techniques, and different types of soloing for different styles within jazz. For example, I'll point out that you probably wouldn't play some fusion type of ideas over the top of "Cherokee." You *could*, but it's really not...you know what I mean.



Frank Malabe



Hank Jaramillo

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- 3) You may enter as many times as you wish. All entries must be mailed individually.
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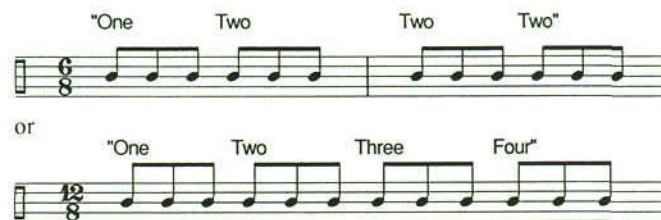
In On The Count

It was first said about riding a bicycle: The difficult part is starting and stopping; the rest is relatively easy. But it could reasonably be applied to playing music with a band. From the listener's point of view, a tight start and finish to a number creates a good impression. If either is ragged, it's far more likely to stand out and be noticed than any slight inaccuracies during the course of the piece. From the player's point of view, you have to be activated. The button that switches you from passive to active has to be pressed, and this must be synchronized exactly with the same reaction from the other members of the band. Everybody has to be brought into the piece in a way that will make them all feel it together, from the moment the first note is played. It's therefore necessary that some direction be given that will start the band off together, and *keep* them together once they've started.

I've actually come across inexperienced, self-taught musicians who think that the count at the beginning of a number is simply a signal, "one, two, three, go!" They don't realize that the tempo and the mood of the piece should be set during the count, and subsequently adhered to by all concerned. An essential part of a musician's skill is to respond to a count in the correct way. It's also useful, *particularly* for drummers, to be able to give a count that will bring other people in confidently.

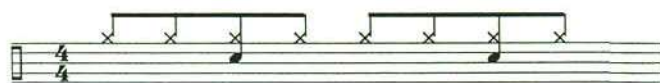
The basic idea of the count is that it's a measure "for nothing." If you're going to play a ride rhythm consisting of straight fours, the count will correspond with those fours. That's easy. If you're playing something more complicated (16ths or syncopated phrasing perhaps) at the top of the piece, there's much more room for error. Locking into a count isn't always as easy as it might seem. People can start running away with the tempo from the moment they start playing. Reasons for this are that they don't apply the count *accurately* to the complexities of what they're doing, or they subconsciously pull the tempo around to their own preconceived idea of where it should be, ignoring the direction of the count. There are not many tunes in which the whole band comes in together playing four straight notes or chords, so all musicians have to learn to synchronize that count of "one, two, three, four" with whatever they're about to play.

There are exceptions to the count of "one, two, three, four," even when a piece is written in 4/4. For instance, a faster number might require a longer count to give people a chance to latch onto it. In this case, a *two-bar* count is given, but rather than counting to four twice, it's more common for the leader to count the first bar in half-tempo so that you get "one - two - one, two, three, four." The "one - two" of the first bar are actually half notes. On the other hand, if a number is very slow, you might just get a count of "three, four," although it's best if this is only done when everybody is familiar with the piece. The idea of reducing the words in the count can only be applied in bars with an *even* number of beats. A two-bar count for a 3/4 tune is, of necessity, "one, two, three, one, two, three." Similarly, for a slow 3/4, it's best to count all three beats. Compound times like 6/8 and 12/8 are usually counted as if they were groups of triplets in 2/4 or 4/4:

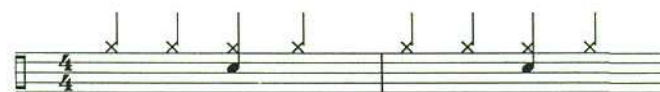


Sometimes in a slow 6/8, for instance, you find people counting one bar as if it were two bars of three: "one, two, three, two, two, three," rather than "one, two, three, four, five, six."

It's important to know whether to expect one or two bars' worth of count before you're *in*. I have *occasionally* been the only person to start playing halfway through the count, but I put that down to enthusiasm! Another problem can be if some members of the band are reading and others are playing by ear. They can all have the same feel for the number, but they might have a different conception of the values of the notes being played. A good example of this is a slow ballad in which the drummer would play:



This might be written in half tempo so that the rhythm is actually spread over two bars, like this:



In accordance with what's written, the backbeat is on 3, but taken over two bars, it evens out and sounds quite normal. Problems can occur at the count if some members of the band are expecting an 8th-note feel, with a backbeat on 2 and 4, while others are expecting a quarter-note feel, with a backbeat on 3. Even if everybody is reading, you can still get a count of "four" spread over two bars. As long as *everybody* is aware of what's happening, discrepancies can be avoided.

There are situations when you *don't* come in playing on the 1 immediately after the "four" of the count. Some are obvious, some less so. Let's consider when you might actually come in before the count of "four." This happens when there is a lead-in. For example:



In this case you come in on the 8th note after "three." The count is there to bring you into *the first full bar*. You *don't* wait for a



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count of "four" to play the lead-in. A lead-in will interrupt the count, as shown. The three Sth-note lead-in is quite common, but it can come in all shapes and sizes. You sometimes find a lead-in that takes up *three* beats of a 4/4 bar. It's a moot point whether this is a lead-in or just a quarter-note rest on the first beat of the first bar. However, this would be counted "one, two, three, four, one."

A lead-in might be played by the whole band, or only by one or two instruments. It might be drums alone, or it might be another solo instrument. It can happen that the tune is sufficiently familiar for the lead-in to *take the place* of the count. The musician who has the lead-in plays it, and the rest of the band takes their cue from that. It might be that a single instrument has an introduction of something like four or eight bars. When this happens, the count is often dispensed with. But you can get a count if the solo player is being given the tempo by someone else, or if a careful leader is giving everyone a point of reference.

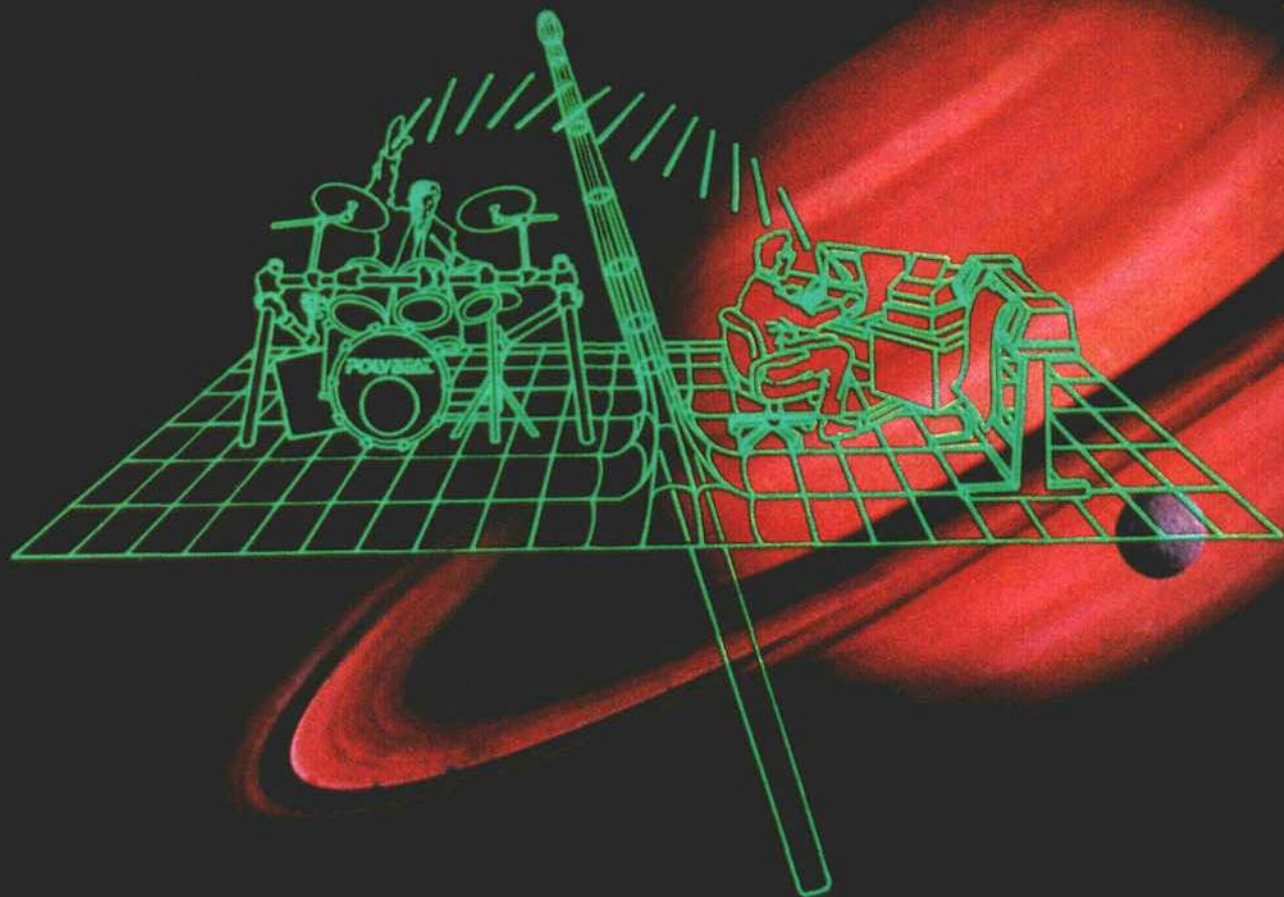
Sometimes the introduction is out of tempo. In this case, you might get an in-tempo lead-in, you might get a count, or you might be expected to pick up the tempo on cue with no guidance except when to start. In fact, coming in at a pre-arranged tempo on a signal is a skill that theater musicians have to develop. An *out loud* count would be intrusive to the action on stage. The musical director might give a "visual count" (i.e., beating time in the air), but this is often just to give notice of the tempo. When the start of the music has to be synchronized with a verbal cue from the stage, the signal to start is usually just a downbeat. If the conductor is playing as well, this is usually given by a nod of the head.

So much for the counts that you *don't* hear. Coming back to the ones that you do, it isn't always a case of a verbal "one, two, three, four," or whatever is appropriate for a particular number. Drumsticks being clicked together is a common substitute. Dixieland bands often favor a foot tapping on the floor. Bands performing with sequencers often have a percussive count at the start of a sequenced track. There can also be variations on the verbal count. I used to play with a keyboard player who would emit four grunts to get things going. I've also heard a bandleader substituting syllables for part of the count to come up with, "one-two, Heav-en-help-us." You can find people who unexpectedly start counting in a different language, but the worst thing is the joker who says "After four—FOUR" and starts playing!

I mentioned earlier that the count should reflect the *mood* of the piece of music about to be played. This is rather obvious when you think of it. A shouted count is fine for a loud rock number, but a gentle ballad needs a gentle count. The person doing the counting should have the number running through his or her head prior to starting it, so that the count is in keeping with it. This needn't only be a matter of reflecting the amount of volume and attack, but also the *length* of the notes that start the number off. Short staccato notes should be heralded by short staccato syllables. Long notes are best signalled by drawing out those syllables.

One of my pet beefs is that the count should always be audible. It *can* be a little too prominent, so that it looks as if the person doing the counting is on an ego-trip: "Listen to me control the band, folks." But even *that* is preferable to a count that is so subtle that only the counter hears it, and the musicians come in one at a time! I think the *sotto-voce* counter often overestimates the volume of a voice used at its normal speaking level in relation to the sound of the band. By comparison it's usually very quiet, but normal speaking volume is generally the *least* that's needed to allow everyone who needs to hear to do so. Sometimes, in a club with a loud audience, the voice does need to be raised. Starting off the band so that everybody is together is far too important to be left to chance. The count must always be given clearly by somebody who knows the tempo and mood of the number, and the other musicians must give it their full attention and respond to it accurately.





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Why build the "world's biggest drum"? I put this question to Lou Dias, owner of England's Supreme Drums, and creator and owner of what has been verified by the *Guinness Book Of World Records* as the rightful claimant of this title. His response was perhaps a little predictable: "Having built drums of all shapes and sizes for customers during the past ten years, I thought it was time to do something a little different."

Having decided this idea was to become a reality, Lou needed to do some research and enlist people with expertise in the various fields of craftsmanship and material supply. In the shell-making department, Lou already had the advantage of an association with Frank Cahill. For a number of years, Frank had been making drumshells for Supreme as a sideline from his main woodworking business, which is making custom-built pet homes. (If nothing else, the percussion industry certainly throws together some unlikely bedfellows.)

After plans were drawn and materials decided upon, Lou had to be quite sure about the facts pertaining to the record he would break. It transpired that the largest drum in existence resided at Disneyland in California, and boasted a respectable 10' 6" diameter. The largest drum ever built is

recorded as being the Boston Jubilee drum, which was 12' in diameter. Sadly, it no longer exists, but 13' seemed a logical size for the new drum in order to avoid any dispute whatsoever on the record.

The technology involved in the *Supreme* drum is really quite straightforward. It didn't require computer design, test pilots, or anything other than hard work and craftsmanship. Five curved and laminated sections fit together to create an assembled drumshell 12' 9" in diameter by 4' deep. Each panel is 1" thick, and is comprised of six sheets of 4' x 8' top-grade finish plywood, 4mm thick (cross-grained). This timber was selected by a London timber merchant who gave Lou and Frank great help in that department. Half joints at each end of the panels ensure that the sections fit together perfectly. The panels are further secured by two plates that run the full length of the seam and are fastened with eight bolts. The wooden counterhoop is made in a similar manner. It's around 4" deep by 1" thick, with extra heavy plates to prevent any stretching in use. The shell was sanded, stained, and laquered as on a conventional drum. However, *unlike* any conventional model, this drum has to be assembled prior to, and dismantled after, each performance.

Getting a drumhead proved to be the main headache for a time, bearing in mind the combined needs for strength, pliability, and the creation of a musical sound for an instrument so large. All in all, it seemed a tall order to meet these demands, other than with material already known to contain these properties. Yet no drumhead maker could supply such a vast size. Many ideas were considered, including suggestions such as using whaleskin, sewing together loads of hides, and other well-meaning but unworkable methods or materials. Finally, it was decided to approach a sailmaker to see if anything used in that line of work would lend itself to the job. A company in Southampton called R & J Dixon took up the challenge by making a head stitched from the strongest sailcloth. Forming a perfect circle 13' in diameter, it has a 2" hem that contains 40 feet of 1" rope for the counterhoop to bear on.

Tensioning a drumhead of such gigantic proportions called for something a little more durable than cast tension lugs, a drumkey, and someone with a strong wrist. Thirty-five metal clamps, manufactured to very exact specifications, hook over the counterhoop and pass through tubular fittings bolted to the shell. All the clamps are individually adjustable and can apply an incredible *one ton* of tension to the drumhead. (Imagine breaking a head on this one!)

The whole drum is mounted on ten cast-iron legs to stand approximately four inches above the ground. This fact conjures up visions of a monster drum hurtling down an inclined stage—much to the horror of the first few rows of the audience. Perhaps Mr. Dias and his merry men fitted the drum with power brakes; I must ask him that one!

But let's get back to my initial question regarding the reasons for making this instrument. For Lou Dias, there is the personal satisfaction of holding a world record, plus the undoubted advertising value to Supreme Drums. The drum is also available for hire to all types of promotions. But the *Supreme* drum has always been intended as a serious instrument. Besides the famous (and would-be famous) drummers who want to strike the brute, interest is being shown by philharmonic orchestras, pop groups, and the film industry.

So, to the drummer who has everything: Here is a winner for your next tour. Personally, I can't wait to see the *pedal!*



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Tricking Your Drum Machine

One of the advantages of owning a drum machine is being able to program difficult patterns and rhythms into it so that you can hear what they are supposed to sound like. You can also play along with the machine until you get the feel of the rhythm.

There is a serious limitation, however. Most drum machines have a maximum resolution of 96, which means that a measure can only be split into 96 parts. In 4/4 time, it means that you can enter subdivisions up to 96th notes, and one would think that most situations would be covered. But certain odd subdivisions will not divide evenly into 96. Suppose, for example, you wanted to program a pattern such as this:



Each beat is taking 1/4 of the 96 available parts, or 24 parts. The 8th notes in the first beat work, because you can divide 24 in half (12 + 12). The 8th-note triplet works because 24 can be divided by three (8 + 8 + 8). The 16th notes fit because 24 can be divided by four (6 + 6 + 6 + 6). But there is no way to divide 24 by five, and so the fourth beat cannot be programmed.

Unless, of course, we find a way to "trick" the drum machine into doing something that it's not supposed to be able to do.

In order to pull this off, you need a machine that allows you to link patterns together into "songs," and that also allows you to assign tempo changes at any point in the song. We'll start with the measure shown above.

First, we have to break the 4/4 measure into two separate bars. The first bar will be in 3/4 time, while the second bar will be in 5/16.



Select an empty pattern on your machine and program the 3/4 measure. Then select another empty pattern and enter the 5/16 bar.

Now, go to the function on your machine that lets you link patterns together into songs. Select the 3/4 measure as the first step of your song, followed by the 5/16 bar. At this point, if you were to play back your song, the 16th notes in the 5/16 bar would be the same speed as the 16th notes in the 3/4 bar. But we need them to be faster, right? This is where the tempo change comes in.

Let's say that the original tempo is set at 60. That means that the four 16th notes at the end of the 3/4 measure will take one second to sound. Now, we want the *five* 16th notes in the 5/16 measure to sound in one second. To do that, we simply increase the tempo of the 5/16 bar. To find out how much, we use a simple formula that we learned years ago in math class (and that we never thought we'd need if we were going to be drummers):

$$\frac{4}{5} = \frac{60}{X}$$

We quickly see that $x = 75$, and so that is the tempo we need to set for the 5/16 bar. (With some machines, you have to enter a tempo change, which is related to the original tempo. In other words, since the original tempo is 60, you have to enter a tempo change of +15, and that gives you a new tempo of 75.)

We now have the following programmed into our song function:



But the effect is this:



There is an important thing to remember about all of this: Not every tempo will work. For example, suppose our original tempo for the 3/4 measure had been 62. The 5/16 bar would then have to be set at 77.5. I don't know of any drum machine that will do that. So, we still have a limitation here. But there are quite a few tempo combinations that *will* work. Here are a few of them (the first number is the 3/4 bar, the second is the 5/16 bar):

48/60, 52/65, 56/70, 60/75, 64/80, 68/85, 72/90, etc.

Do you see a pattern emerging? These are all 4/5 relationships, and they will work as long as the first tempo is divisible (evenly) by four.

Let's take this a step further. Consider the following measure:



We can proceed the same way as before. First, split the bar into a 3/4 measure followed by a 7/16 bar.



Program each measure into a separate pattern, and then join the two patterns into a song. To find the relationship between the tempos you will need, use a 4/7 equation. Just to get you started, here are a few of them:

48/84, 52/91, 56/98, 60/105, 64/112, etc.

Now, let's try something a little more advanced. Suppose you wanted to program this:



You will first need to program four separate bars into four separate patterns, and then link them together into a song.



You can then use a 4/5/7 formula to get the tempos you will need. As an example, let's start with a tempo of 60. Your song will be constructed as follows:



This same idea can be applied to other odd subdivisions—tens, elevens, thirteens, or whatever. All it takes is a little bit of simple math, and you will be tricking your machine into playing subdivisions that it doesn't know it can play.





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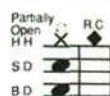
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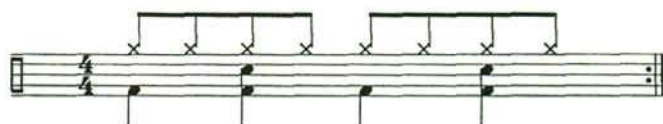
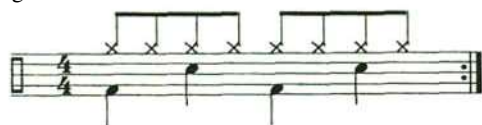
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Power Beats For Beginners: Part 2

MUSIC KEY



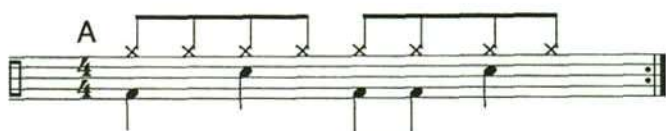
In part 1 of "Power Beats" you learned the following two beats:



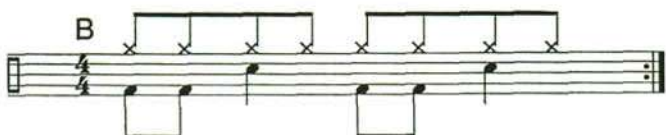
These two beats are to be taken seriously, because you'll probably be called on to play them on a regular basis as long as you play drums. That's how popular they are, and that's why part 1 of "Power Beats" focused on two useful beats instead of 200 useless ones. Don't let their simplicity fool you. Remember, a successful beat doesn't have to be complex to be good. *A successful beat provides appropriate accompaniment for the song in which it is to be used.*

The variations you're about to learn are almost as simple as the power beats themselves. The nice thing about them is that they've been transcribed from popular songs spanning a wide range of musical tastes. They're not just exercises; *they're real beats*. As in part 1, only a basic knowledge of music-reading skills and an inexpensive metronome are required to learn these variations. Part 1 also clearly outlined some very helpful practice techniques, including how to use a metronome. All the practice guidelines outlined in part 1 are to be used here also.

The first new beat we will look at is a variation of the first power beat. Variation A is achieved by adding the bass drum to the "&" of the third count of the basic beat:



Variation B adds the bass drum to the "&" of both the first count and the third count:



Variation A can be heard as the main beat in "Out In The Cold," played by Dave Holland on the *Judas Priest...Live* album. Variation A is also the main beat in Van Halen's "Pretty Woman" and in "Us And Them" from Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* album.

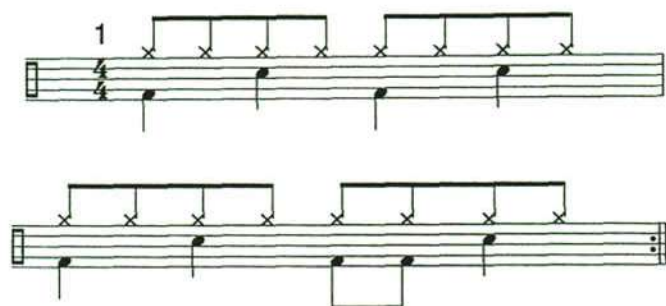
Nick Mason plays the ride cymbal in place of the hi-hat in "Us And Them," but the 8th-note pattern remains the same. The ride cymbal can replace the hi-hat in any one of the beats you'll see here.

Alex Van Halen used variation B in "Ain't Talkin' 'Bout Love," which can be found on Van Halen's first album. Variation B is also the main beat in "China Grove" by The Doobie Brothers. Charlie Watts used it in The Rolling Stones' "2000 Light Years From Home," making the beat a simpler one by playing quarter notes on the hi-hat rather than 8th notes. The quarter-note hi-hat

pattern Charlie Watts played in "Light Years" creates this simplified version of variation B:

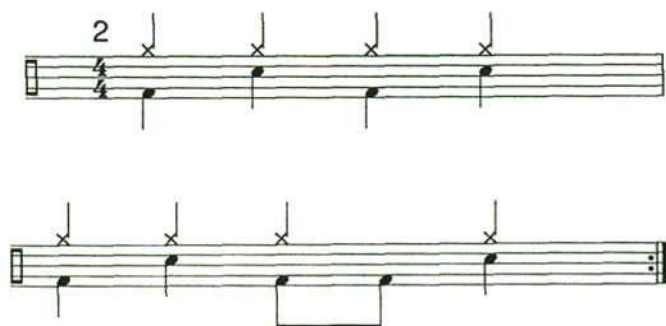


The variations work great when combined with the basic beat to form two-measure phrases. Phrase 1 combines the basic beat with variation A:



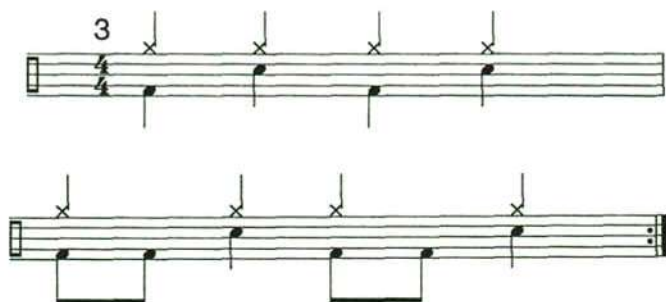
Tico Torres of Bon Jovi puts phrase 1 to work during the verses of "You Give Love A Bad Name." The phrase is also the driving force behind Rockwell's "Somebody's Watching Me."

A quarter-note hi-hat pattern can be used successfully in any of these variations. For example, when the hi-hat pattern in phrase 1 is changed from 8th notes to quarter notes, phrase 2 is the result:



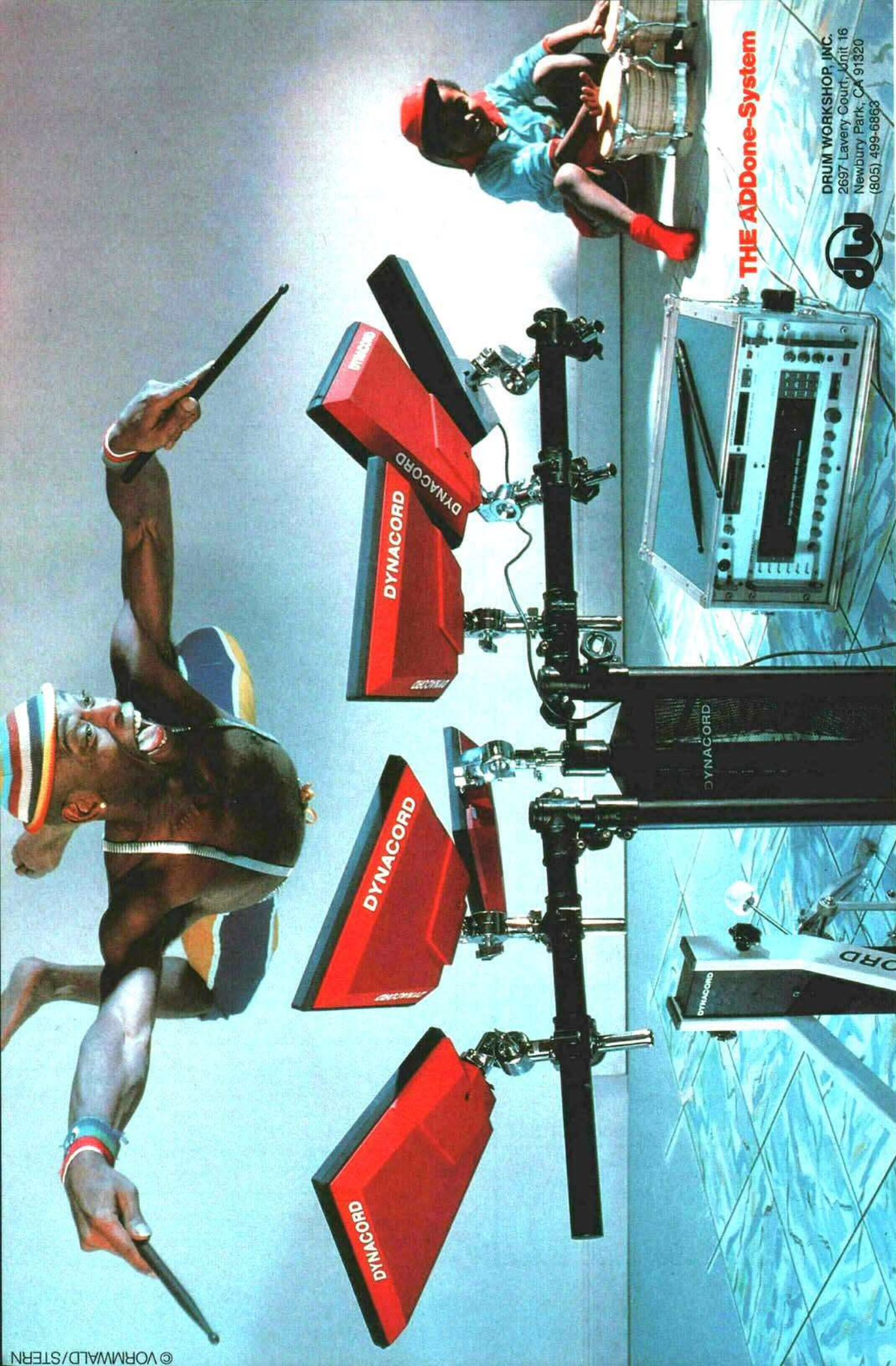
Phrase 2 is very prominent in "I'm So Excited," by the Pointer Sisters.

Phrase 3 combines the basic beat with variation B, again making use of the quarter-note hi-hat pattern:



This phrase also shows up quite often in "I'm So Excited."

The variations themselves can be combined to form two- and



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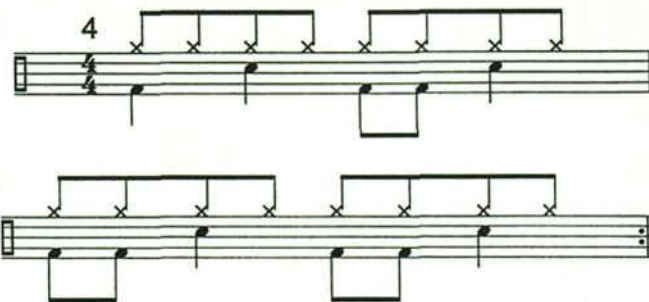
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four-measure phrases. Phrase 4 is a two-measure phrase that combines variations A and B:

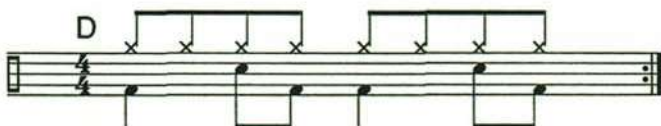


Listen to "Round And Round" by Ratt and you'll hear Bobby Blotzer play this phrase. Ringo Starr used the same phrase in the song "Magical Mystery Tour" by The Beatles, at times substituting quarter notes for 8th notes on the hi-hat.

The next set of variations connect the snare and bass drum through the use of 8th notes. In variation C the bass drum is added to the "&" of the second count:



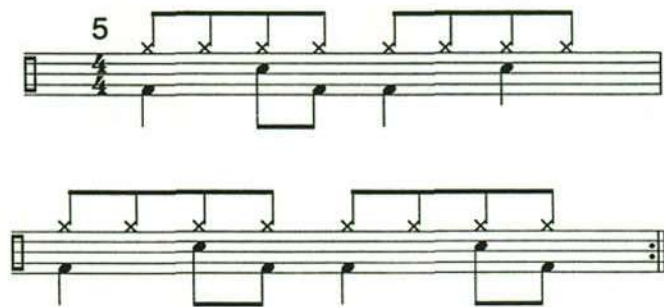
In variation D the bass drum is added to the "&" of 4 as well as the "&" of 2:



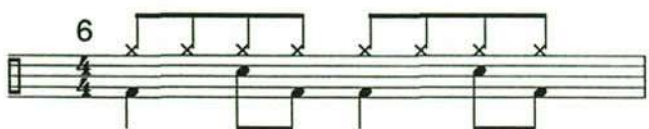
Variations C and D are extremely common beats. Max Weinberg plays variation C through most of Bruce Springsteen's "Born In The U.S.A." Listen to Stewart Copeland play it in "Every Breath You Take" by The Police. Bon Jovi's Tico Torres alters variation C by playing 8th notes on the bell of his ride cymbal, instead of on the hi-hat, in the hit "Livin' On A Prayer."

Variation -D has probably been rattling around your mind as long as you've been listening to music. "Jumpin' Jack Flash" by The Rolling Stones and "My Life" by Billy Joel (Liberty DeVitto on drums) each have D in common. You'll also hear variation D in "Jamie's Cryin'" by Van Halen, "Deacon Blues" by Steely Dan (with an open hi-hat on the first beat of each measure), and in "De Do Do Do, De Da Da Da" by The Police.

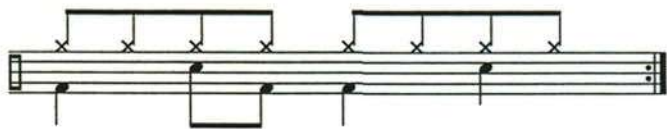
Combine C and D, and a new two-measure phrase (phrase 5) is born:



The two measures in phrase 5 can be reversed with successful results, as shown in phrase 6:

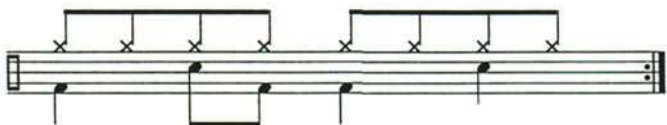
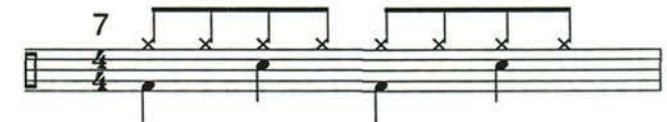


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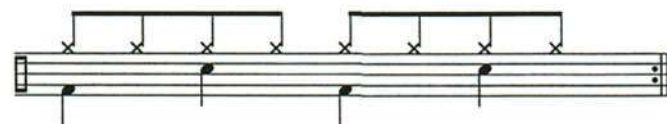
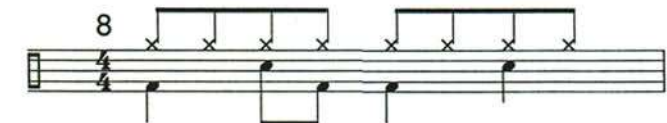


This is the pattern played in "Smuggler's Blues," sung by Glenn Frey and popularized by the TV show *Miami Vice*.

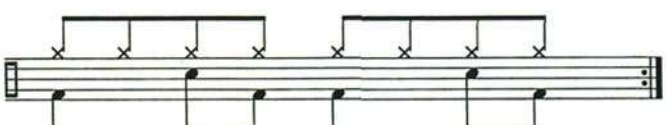
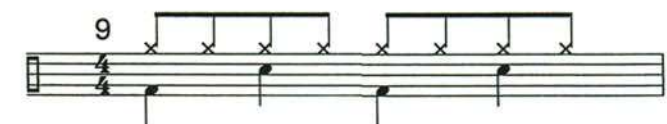
Here are four more phrases created by mixing the main beat with variations C and D.



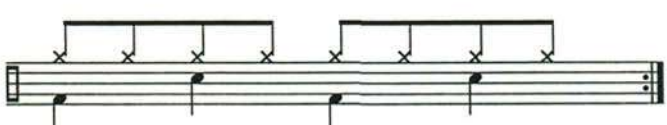
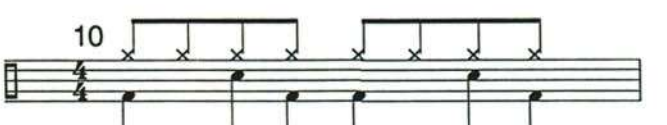
Phrase 8 (formed by reversing the two measures in phrase 7):



Phrase 9:



Phrase 10 (the reverse of phrase 9):



Phrase 10 is a popular one. Bill Gibson played it in "The Power Of Love" by Huey Lewis & The News, and it was also used in "P.Y.T." from Michael Jackson's *Thriller* album.

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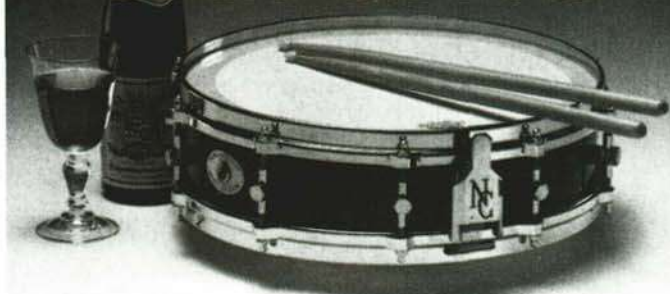
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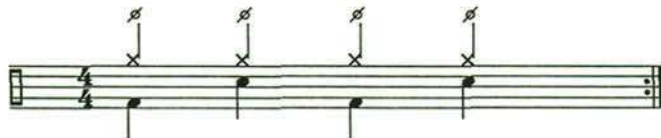
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labeled "heavy metal." There is more to the art of heavy metal drumming than just cranking up the volume, and *all* of the above examples can be modified to create a strong heavy-metal feel.

First, crank up the volume. In other words, accent each note heavily. *Forte* becomes *fortissimo*. Make sure your stroke remains smooth and flowing as your accents become sharper. Avoid pounding down into the drums and cymbals; visualize yourself "pulling the sound out," not "pounding the sound in."

One of the more subtle techniques used by the best of the heavy metal drummers is playing quarter notes on a partially open hi-hat. A quarter-note version of the first power beat will be used to illustrate the partially open hi-hat, but for heavy-metal purposes the name will be changed to the "Looks That Kill" beat. (Tommy Lee of Motley Crue actually alternates *both* of the original power beats in "Looks That Kill.") The song opens with this beat:

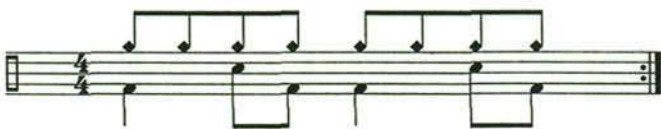


Later in the song Tommy changes to the "four on the floor" bass drum pattern:

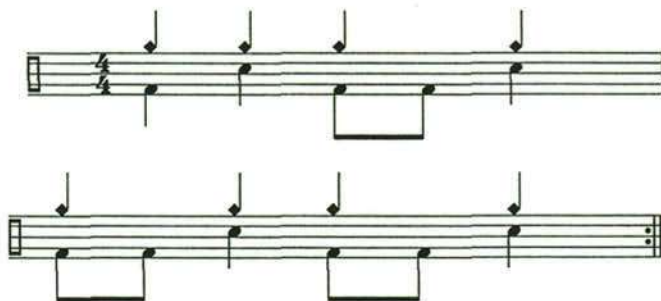


To achieve the "fat" sound produced by playing quarter notes on the partially open hi-hat, relax your hi-hat foot so the cymbals loosen slightly (the cymbals should always be in contact with each other, so be careful not to separate them completely). When played, the partially open hi-hat gives off a heavy "shhhh" sound. Practice the last two examples long enough so the hi-hat sounds consistent from one beat to the next. Then go back and play *every* example using the hi-hat pattern illustrated in the heavy-metal examples.

Another way to modify all the examples to fit the heavy-metal style is to do as Tico Torres did in "Livin' On A Prayer." Play 8th notes on the bell of the ride cymbal in all examples, as Tico demonstrated in variation D:



Quarter notes on the bell of the ride cymbal can give a song a really heavy feel. Here's a heavier version of phrase 4:



Play the examples again, this time substituting the quarter-note-on-the-bell pattern.

If you put in a half hour a day practicing these beats, you'll have them all down in a couple of weeks. Once you've learned them you'll be in pretty good company, and you should feel great knowing you can play along with today's top pop and rock drummers.



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Gottlieb continued from page 20

drums had to be in a certain place, and that's where we left them.

Cafe is sort of in and out on that track. His forte as a percussionist is congas and bongos, but he plays in more of a Brazilian mode than a Latino mode. I guess from playing with Airto and Nana [Vasconcelos]

los] so much, I've got a little of that feel in my playing, so it fits really well.

"The Aviary" started as an improvisation with me and John Abercrombie. Stylistically, it's a lighter type of free playing than Metheny's "Offramp." I like to listen to the great drummers like Paul Motian and Ed Blackwell, who are known for playing in a free context, and I feel I can do justice to that type of music. In fact, I subbed for Paul Motian with Charlie Haden last summer, and I got some real positive feedback. I also get to do some of that with Gil Evans. A lot of the rolls on the snare drum and cymbal are a direct result of my studying with Joe Morello.

The drumming on "Alaska" sort of reminds me of Metheny's "San Lorenzo"—basic light drum groove, some cross-stick, and a lot of cymbals. There was a lot of free improvisation in the middle section, but we did it over the basic track, and we experimented with a lot of textures. I did all of the percussion on this particular cut. In fact, I dumped some of the original drum parts to give the percussion more room to breathe. I remember getting rid of a snare drum roll and replacing it with a shaker. Instead of having a drum track with overdubbed percussion, I was trying to get more of a drum/percussion track. That shows Airto's influence, because he's the master of combining drums and percussion. I don't do it at his level, though. He does it all at

once, but I have to overdub. [laughs] But it's the same basic concept.

"Waterfall" is a short little pop tune with a quasi rock beat. Cafe's percussion adds a focal point. The intro of the tune is an eight-measure solo that I wrote while I was working on Indian rhythms with John McLaughlin. Cafe and I play it in unison, and in a way, it has nothing to do with the song. But I'm glad it's on there, because it illustrates my level of rhythmic development during that time with McLaughlin.

"Being" was just live playing with Mitch Forman in the studio. It also kind of relates to the way we were playing with John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu band at the time. Instead of using just a flat cymbal, I also used a heavy ride, and I found myself alternating between them. I'm finding that I can switch from a flat to a heavy ride in the middle of a chorus. I used to not be able to do that without detracting tonally from what was going on, but without even thinking about it, I seem to have found a way to use it as another color. It's not traditional ride playing where you stay on one ride until the chorus, and then you switch. I'm switching back and forth in the course of four measures to create a different texture.

RM: I really like the next track, "Duet," where it's just you and McLaughlin. I thought the brushes sounded great with the acoustic guitar.

DG: When it comes to brushes, I'm just fumbling around compared to guys like Morello or Buddy Rich, but at least it shows that I've been influenced by that tradition. We cut the track when we were in the studio doing the Mahavishnu *Adventures In Radioland* album. I asked John if we could do something together for my album, and he said, "Okay, but I want it to be special." A couple of days later, I was sitting on the floor of the studio, and he started playing this riff on his acoustic guitar. I started banging on the floor, and we had a ball for about 10 or 15 minutes. Then I asked him if we could record it, and he said okay. So I grabbed some drums and we did it. Having the chance to play duo with John McLaughlin is an honor.

We did "Upon A Time" backwards. I suggested to John Abercrombie that he play the melody and solo while I played along with him, and we would go back and overdub the changes later. Most normal human beings would have laid the chords down first and then done the solo. But we tried it with John doing the solo first and me imagining the chord changes, hoping that I was in the right place. And it worked. John then overdubbed a bass part and the chords. You could say that was a really stupid way to do it, but on the other hand, John and I were able to interact in a live way, which we couldn't have done if we had made a rhythm track first and then had him solo over it.

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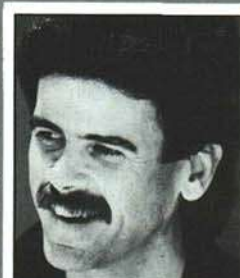
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The last song, "Peace Of Mind," is a textural piece where I use the Paiste Percussion Rack and Mark Egan plays fretless bass. Mark and I have been playing together for 17 years, and it's great to play music with one of your best friends. His representation on this record was kept on the subtle side, because we didn't want this to end up sounding like an Elements album. But still, his presence is felt throughout, and he was a big help from the production standpoint.

RM: You've got a very distinguished list of musicians on this album, including McLaughlin, Abercrombie, Steve Khan, Dave Samuels, and Bill Evans. You didn't even have a record deal when these tracks were all made. How do you get players like that to be on a record that might never come out?

DG: The bottom line about this record is that it was done with a lot of love and friendship. A lot of people think that the music business is all cut-throat and that everybody's in competition. But the highest level musicians are some of the most giving people that you could ever come across. And everyone on this record gave in such a big way. It's a reflection of the camaraderie of the musicians in this business, who are willing to get together and help someone out.

RM: You mentioned your playing with Gil Evans a little while ago. That gig has certainly become one of the constants in

your life.

DG: Playing with Gil Evans is one of the most unique experiences I think I'll ever have in my life. It's so different from anything I've ever been in, and yet it relates to everything I've ever done. I don't know how much attention this band is ever going to get, because Gil is 75 years old, and he's content to just play on Monday nights at Sweet Basil's. But we all live for those Monday nights. I've done two trips to Europe where I flew all night just to get back to New York in time for Gil's gig, and everybody in the band has done things like that.

It's a situation where you start with the basic framework of a tune dictated by Gil, and then the band just improvises. Anything can happen. It's to the point where Mark and I can go into 3/4 in the middle of a 4/4 tune, we can change keys, we can start, we can stop, we can change the tempo....It's just totally unpredictable music. It's incredibly fun music to play, but you really have to use your ears or it won't work.

I guess Jack DeJohnette is my role model for this kind of playing, because it is reminiscent of when he was in the Miles Davis group in the early '70s, and they would just start with a motif and go with it. In fact, Jack came to see the band one night. I was really knocked out because he stayed the whole night and said he really liked it. Another night Elvin

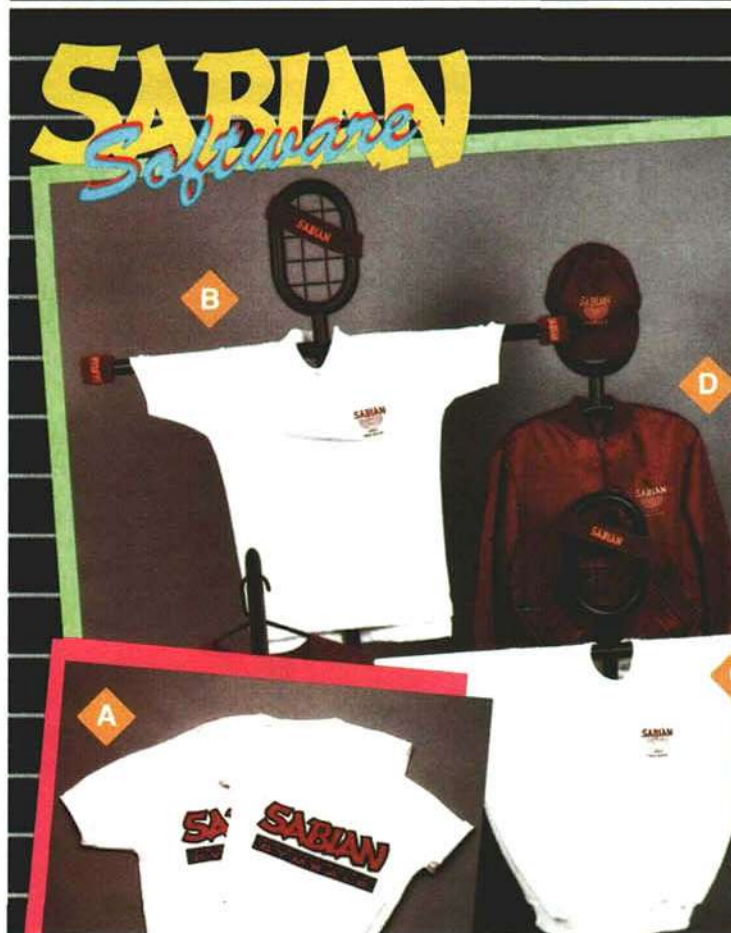
Jones came in. He was sort of staring at me from about five feet away, and I was freaking out. When we finished playing he came over and said, "Gottlieb! You're taking care of business," and he picked me up and hugged me. [laughs] I'll never forget that.

RM: I remember how close you came to turning down the gig.

DG: That's a hard story to tell, because it really touches close to home. The drummer who had been playing with Gil for two or three years was Adam Nussbaum, who's a good buddy of mine. Adam asked me to sub for him with Gil for two Monday nights. And after those two nights, Gil asked me if I would continue to play. It was devastating, because I knew that Adam was on his way back to New York, thinking that he was going to be playing with Gil the following Monday, and Gil wanted to make a change. I know that changes occur in bands from time to time, but I'm the last guy who would ever want to take a gig away from somebody else.

RM: I remember what you went through when Metheny called you two weeks before a tour was supposed to start and told you that he had decided to make a change.

DG: Right. I didn't know what to make of it. Here was someone I had played with for 11 years, and he was letting me go. Of course, your immediate reaction is, "I'm a terrible drummer. I've been fired from my



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gig." In certain cases, if you're not cutting it, that might be true. So it should be a time for self-analysis, in terms of where you're at. In that respect, as hard as it might be, it can be a positive thing. I remember having a really horrible night playing with John McLaughlin, and he was really down on certain things that had happened musically. But later he came up to me and said, "I'm really glad that we had this horrible night, because now we have a place from which to grow." So if you get replaced for what you analyze as musical reasons, it can give you food for thought.

RM: But sometimes getting fired has nothing to do with not cutting it musically.

DG: Exactly. Gil knew that I was upset about the situation, and so he came over to me at a rehearsal and said, "Danny, don't take it personally," almost in a very stern way. At first I didn't know what he meant, but gradually I realized that it wasn't anything between me and Adam, or between Gil and Adam, or between Gil and me. Gil just wanted to try something different. And if you look at the history of music, people are always changing gigs, so if you're going to be a musician, you have to accept that sometimes you're going to be fired from a gig. Look at Buddy Rich. After he died, there were all of these tributes that told of all the different bands he had been with. It's not that common to be in a situation like Charlie Watts is in with the Rolling Stones, where you can stay in the same band for 20 years. Sure, there are a few exceptions, like the MJQ or the amount of time Morello was with Brubeck. But those are exceptions. Look at all of the different people that have been with Miles Davis.

RM: People always associate Elvin with John Coltrane, but he was only in the group for about six years. Then Coltrane decided he wanted to use two drummers, so he brought in Rashied Ali. Elvin's feelings were hurt, so he quit.

DG: Yeah, there have been times when I auditioned for a gig, and I was hurt when I didn't get it. But you have to realize that it's just a gig. Your life isn't over. That's just part of being a musician. There are going to be people who love your playing, people who hate it, and everything in between. Musicians are emotional people, so we want people to like what we do. But it ain't always gonna be like that. We just have to be strong enough to enjoy what we do.

RM: So how did you ultimately resolve your feelings about being asked to replace your friend?

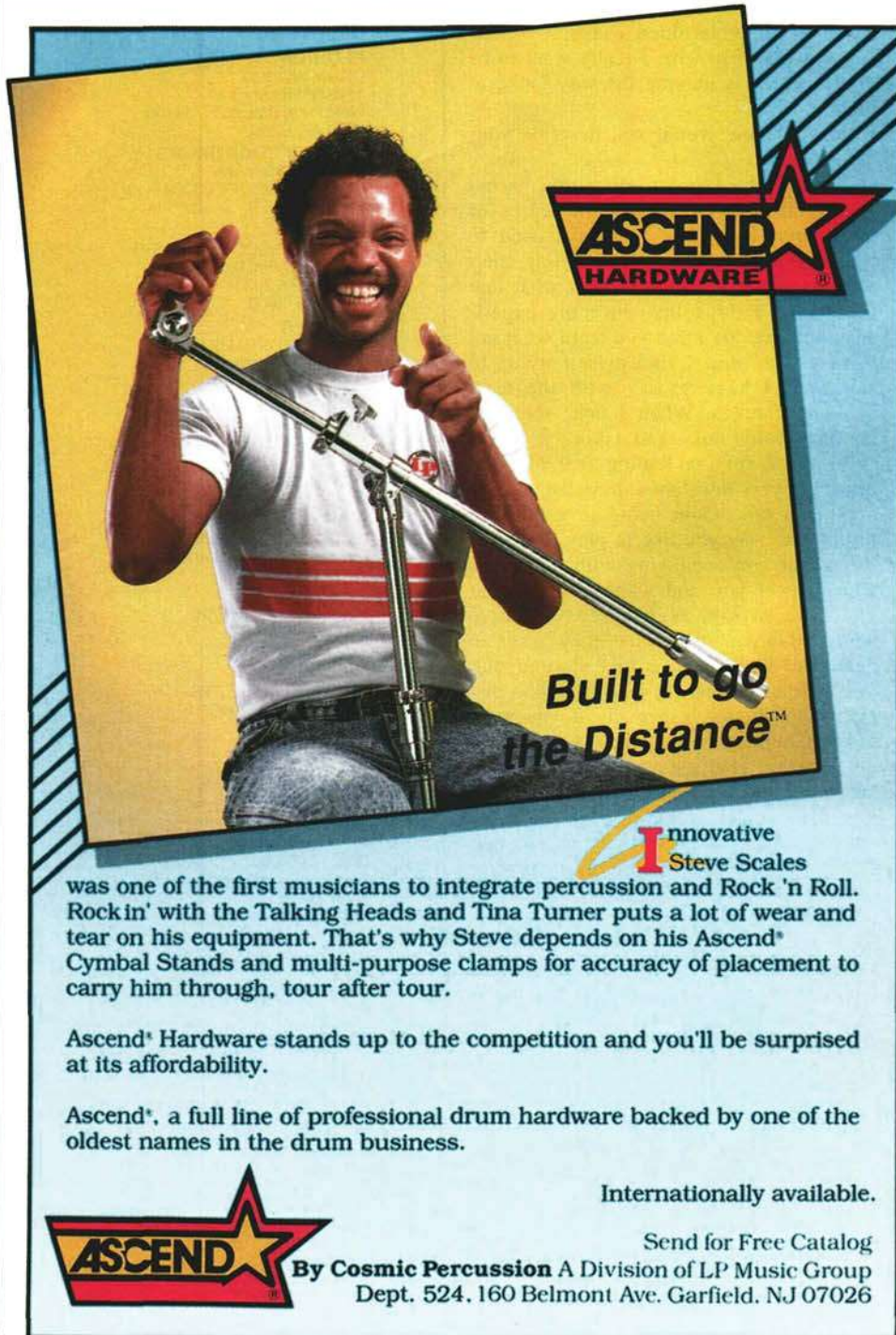
DG: Adam and I talked about it, and I also talked to Mel [Lewis] about it. Mel said that the same thing had happened to him before, and that neither Adam nor I should be uptight about it, because great things were going to happen. And lo and behold,

what happens? Adam gets the gig with Michael Brecker. He might not have been available if he had still been with Gil, but he got that gig and it's brought him into the public eye to a greater degree. I've heard nothing but great comments about his playing with Michael. And for me, it was a chance to do something at home in New York for a change. So it ended on a positive note.

It's a funny business sometimes. Adam told me a story about the Wayne Shorter audition, which a lot of drummers auditioned for, including me. Terri Lynn Carington eventually got the gig, and I thought she was a wonderful choice. Anyway, Adam told me that he was in a record

store, and he ran into another drummer he knew. The other drummer had a Wayne Shorter album under his arm, but he didn't mention the audition, and neither did Adam. They talked to each other on the phone that night and said, "What's going on here? We both know that we're auditioning for Wayne Shorter, but we wouldn't admit it to each other." And I'm the same way. You get very protective because it's such a competitive thing, but what you learn is that we're all in this together. That's just the nature of this business. And you know something? I've never, in all my life, gotten a gig that I auditioned for.

RM: But you work steadily.



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DG: I work steadily. Because once you start to develop some sort of style, people will hire you for what you do. The idea is to find the right situation, where you can play the way you want to play. That's what Adam has with Michael Brecker, and that's what I seem to have with Gil. Of course, when you're a leader, like Mel Lewis, you can play the way you want because it's your band. But still, sometimes you're lucky enough to find a situation where you can just be yourself. I have a friend named Debra Dobkin who's a great percussionist, and she has that situation in Wang Chung. I had it in the Pat Metheny Group. It's nice, because we've all done those generic gigs where we had to try to fit into someone else's concept. But as I've gotten older, I've sort of narrowed it down to what I really want to be doing, which is playing the way I like to play.

RM: And how would you describe your own playing?

DG: That's hard to put into words, except to say that I strive for a high degree of musicality. One thing I always used to hear people talk about was editing their playing. At first, I didn't know what that meant, but I think that the more experience you get, the more you learn what not to play. And now I find myself trying to say what I have to say with the least amount of notes. When I hear someone playing really busy and taking a lot of choruses, I get the feeling that I'm not hearing a very developed musician.

When I talk about being in a position to play the way you like to play, I guess I mean that you're playing with musicians who respect you and want to hear what you have to say, as opposed to people who make you play what they want to hear. But when you're first starting out, you have to do that. In fact, it's good discipline to do that, especially if you want to be a studio musician where you have to be generic. That's really not my forte, because I like to be spontaneous and let my playing be totally dependent on what's going on around me. Often, that means I'll play it differently every time.

Some people are able to play the way they play, and it happens to work perfectly for the studio. I see Steve Gadd and Dave Weckl as being the kind of drummers who can do that, because their playing is very precise and, for lack of a better term, studio-oriented. Their phrasing is very rhythmic, the subdivisions are perfect, and it just lays well. My playing is coming from more of an Elvin/Tony/Airto approach, where it's kind of emotional, over-the-bar-line playing. That kind of playing doesn't work in every situation. Let's face it, they don't hire Elvin Jones for jingles.

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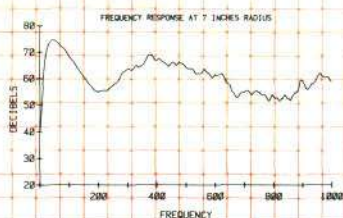
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that many gigs where you can sound really unique, the way Elvin sounded with Coltrane, or Morello sounded with Brubeck, or Tony sounded with Miles. Drummers used to be known for the way they played with a particular group, but ever since Steve Gadd, drummers seem to be more respected for being able to handle a lot of things in a more or less generic manner.

But in today's economy, that's what you've got to do, because there seem to be many more playing opportunities for people who sound generic than for people who sound totally unique. And that makes me a little sad, because I think some of the tradition of the drums is being lost. Now, it seems that you can be successful just by

being able to play a good groove with a strong backbeat, without really having much knowledge of the instrument. I mean, there's nothing wrong with doing that, if that's what the music calls for. But I miss that attitude of wanting to know as much as possible about the instrument, and I'm sad to think that the virtuosity of the drums is being forgotten.

Obviously I'm generalizing here, because I know that there are some young drummers who *are* interested in the tradition. But I just can't understand why more of the top drummers aren't coming to Morello, because he's got all of that knowledge to share. Who else is there who studied with George Lawrence Stone

and Billy Gladstone, and who can pass on their concepts the way Joe can? And it's not a matter of the technique locking you into a certain style. You can apply it to anything you want to do, from the softest jazz trio to the loudest rock band.

RM: There are different values now. A lot of people feel that, since today's music doesn't call for a lot of technique, then why have it? And if there is a need for it, there's a drum machine that can do it. So why spend a lot of time with a practice pad when you could be reading manuals and learning more about MIDI?

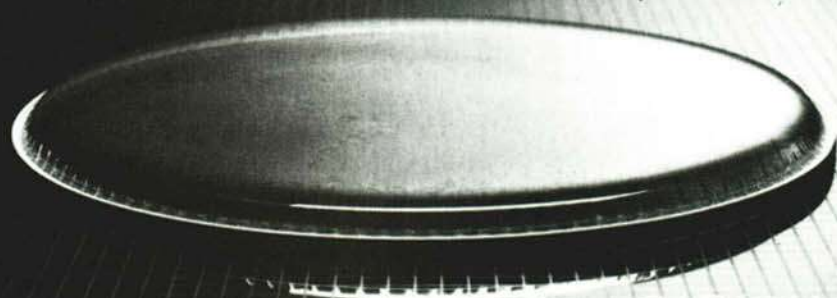
DG: Because there are still some applications that can't be touched by a machine. The tradition of jazz is that it's spontaneous, so as a musician it's nice to have as wide a textural and sonic palette as possible. Part of the reason I've been thinking about this lately is that we recently lost Buddy Rich, and you couldn't see him without being affected by his command of the instrument. Of course, I also went through a period where chops were taboo, and I thought that Maynard Ferguson's high notes were just for show and were not good music. But then I realized that it *was* good music. I'm not down on people who can't play amazing single-stroke rolls. I'm just saying that I would hate to see a certain tradition not being upheld by the drummers of my generation.

RM: You mentioned the sonic palette a moment ago, so let's use that to segue into a discussion about your equipment. I don't think I've ever seen you twice with the same setup. Obviously, you play in so many different settings that you have to adapt for each situation. So what guidelines do you use for selecting the proper equipment for the job?

DG: All I can do is talk about specific situations, and tell you what my choices were based on, because I've got an arsenal of things to choose from. With John McLaughlin I wanted to have a double bass drum kit, mostly because of the tradition of Billy Cobham. Also, I had never tried using double bass before, so it seemed like a good excuse to do it. But then, on some of the tours with John, the economic situation dictated that I use a much smaller kit. So even with the same gig, it wasn't that one setup was perfect for the gig and something else didn't work. I do try to figure out what sounds will be appropriate for each gig, but sometimes I enjoy trying to work within a certain framework.

For example, on Gil's gig, we've got 17 people crowded on a tiny bandstand, so I have to use the smallest possible set. But by not having a lot of stuff, I'm forced to make the most out of what I do have. That's especially true with cymbals. I've always had a sort of "I never met a cymbal I didn't like" attitude, and with Pat Metheny and Elements I had the opportunity to try anything texturally that came to mind.

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I think it reached its peak with John McLaughlin, because when he first hired me, he said, "I hear you're into cymbals. Bring a pile of them." So I called Paiste and asked them to send everything I could think of. All of these crates arrived, and there were something like 75 cymbals littered all over the stage. I brought about 30 cymbal stands, and I was going to have cymbals all over the place. I drove the roadie nuts, because I kept changing the setup.

Finally I realized that having that many cymbals was distracting, and the music didn't really lend itself to that. I started finding ways to get more sounds out of the same cymbal, so that I still had plenty of colors without needing so many cymbals. I've got it to the point where, with Gil, I'll often just have a ride, a crash, and a pair of hi-hats. When I need a change of color, I can do it with dynamics as opposed to going to a whole other sound. I'm also changing back and forth from wood-tip sticks to nylon-tip sticks. On some songs, I need the extra cut and the highs I get from the cymbals with nylon,

whereas other tunes sound better with wood on the cymbals. But basically I'm finding that the simpler things are, the more I can concentrate on the music.

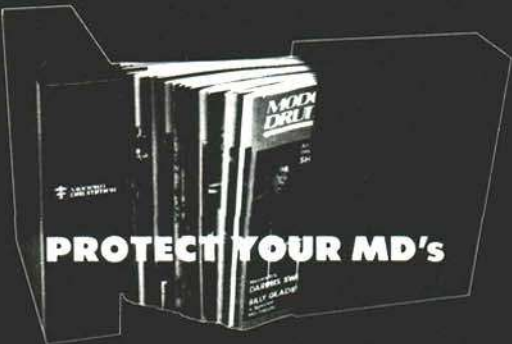
RM: If you're going to use just one ride and one crash, they would have to be pretty versatile cymbals. I presume you wouldn't use a flat ride cymbal in a situation like that.

DG: I might take that as my third cymbal, because that's sort of my characteristic sound. But if I were just going to have two, I would probably use an 18" and a 20", or maybe an 18" and a 22". Right now I've become pretty addicted to the Paiste 3000 series, but if I get a new cymbal or find an old one I forgot about, I might use that. So I just kind of pick and choose—which is kind of consistent with my personality, [laughs] I am very accustomed to Paiste cymbals, and if I really have to get "my" sound, I know how to get it on those—especially the 602 flat cymbal. But that's not to say that I can't use something else. A lot of times when I'm touring I have to use rented equipment, and it could be anything. I try to be flexible enough to use whatever is available. In fact, I got a chance to visit the Istanbul cymbal factory, and I bought some Istanbuls that I'll use on occasion for the sounds they provide. But Paiste cymbals are what I'm really used to, and sometimes if I don't have them, I really miss them.

But there's not just one setup that gets "my" sound across. I find that it's nice to have a wide cross section of things to choose from. Sometimes, like with Gil, a 14" floor tom is perfect where a 16" would be too heavy. But in another situation, a 16" drum would be perfect. I've got a bunch of Ludwig snare drums that are really great, but I've also got an Barnes snare drum that has its own sound. I was planning to use that the night that Sting played with Gil Evans in Italy, and the strainer popped off right before the concert. I was heartbroken. I had three other snare drums with me that all sounded great, but they didn't have *that* sound for *that* gig. I remember reading that Larrie London takes seven snare drums to recording sessions, and it's the same thing. If you're serious about it, you'll experiment with different things.

RM: How involved are you with electronics these days?

DG: I've experimented a lot with Dynacord and Simmons products, but lately I'm just really digging the sound of acoustic drums. At the moment, I'm using the acoustic drums as the center of my setup, and I use electronics for effects, much like a percussionist. For example, Mark and I recently did a tour with guitarist Alex DiGrassi, and one of the highlights was a duet between tabla and guitar. I triggered Dynacord tabla samples from electronic pads, and that's the kind of integration of



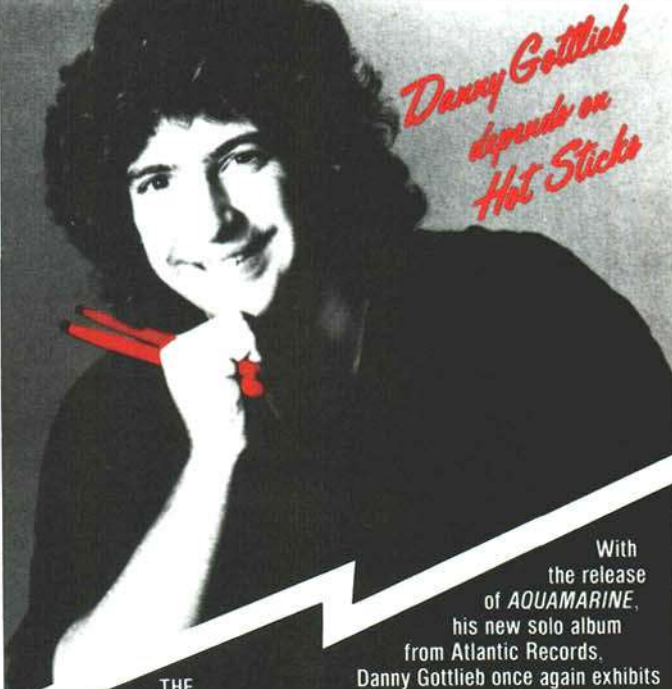
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electronics that I've been enjoying. If I were in a situation like the one Dave Weckl is in with Chick Corea, then I might use electronics more. But at the moment, none of the groups I play in have the capacity to deal with an elaborate electronics setup.

RM: At the beginning of this interview you said that you had reached a point where doing your own album was the next logical step. Well, you've done that now, so where do you go from here?

DG: I'm not sure what the next step will specifically be, but the overall plan is just to continue to grow. I actually find it amazing that I'm able to have a career playing the drums, but there's nothing I'd

rather do. I remember when I lost the Metheny gig I was wondering if I would ever play with musicians that good again. Around that time I read the interview in *Modern Drummer* with Chester Thompson, and he was talking about the same thing. He said that when he lost the Weather Report gig, he was sitting around thinking, "Was it all a dream?" But ultimately he got the Genesis gig. And that's what has happened with me. I've been able to play with some pretty amazing musicians. You just go on to different gigs, and you take it as far as you can. There's a lot out there if you're willing to take it seriously and make a commitment. And you can create an identity for yourself if you work

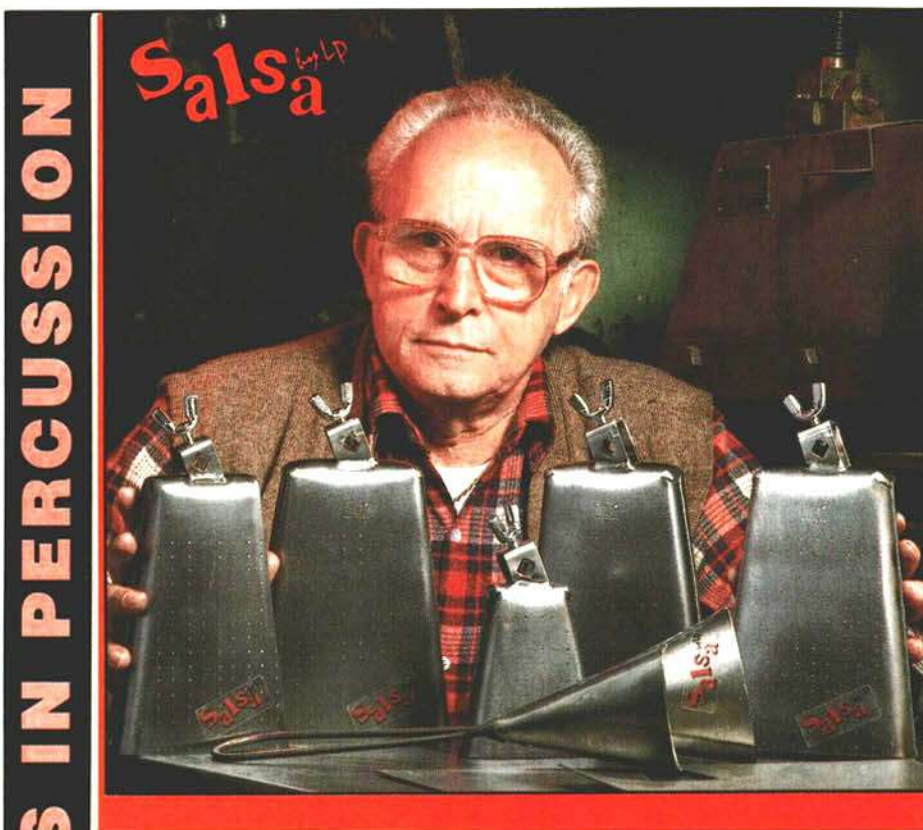
at it long enough and come up with a concept.

RM: Even though you play in so many different settings, you do have a certain style of your own in terms of the way you approach time. How did your concept for that develop?

DG: Someone asked me a similar question in a clinic recently. He said, "You seem to be very free with the time, yet the time stays consistent. How do you get to the point where you can play like that?" I had to think about it for a while, but I finally decided that it comes from analysis, a lot of playing, and maturity. In other words, I didn't just wake up one day able to function like that. I had to listen to Elvin and DeJohnette and Tony a lot before I even had an idea of what they were doing. If Buddy Rich had been the only drummer I listened to, I would have had no idea how to approach any other style. So you have to be familiar with a lot of styles, so that you know what you are trying to sound like, and then you have to play with people who can play that way. At first you might just play stuff that sounds like nonsense, but the only way to work on it is to play it. I mean sure, there are guys like Tony Williams who are great when they're 17, but that doesn't happen very often. For most of us it takes years, and it takes playing with musicians who will be critical.

So to answer that guy's question, I couldn't just give him a couple of exercises that would help him play like that. In my case, that type of playing came about in the Metheny group, because I needed something that was in between jazz and rock. If it was too free, it didn't work, and if it was too strict, it didn't work either. I had to kind of skirt the difference between the two. Sometimes the freer playing is hard to grasp at first. I remember buying a Pharoah Sanders record in high school with Billy Hart on drums. I thought it was the most avant garde, weird music I had ever heard. But I listened to it again after about three years of college, and I thought, "I was freaked out by *this!*" When I first heard George Adams play, I didn't have any idea what was going on. Now I play with him in Gil's band, and it's one of my greatest joys.

So I still feel that I'm growing. We once talked about how being able to cover a lot of types of music could be a liability, in that I would never be known for one thing the way that someone like Elvin Jones is. But by doing all of these different styles, I feel that I'm getting better at all of them, and that my overall concept is stronger. I still have a long way to go, but that's a positive thing. It's funny, some people ask me why I still practice so much. My God, I have five million things I want to work on, if I only had the time.



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HIGHLIGHTS IN PERCUSSION

PAT MASTELOTTO (Mr. Mister)

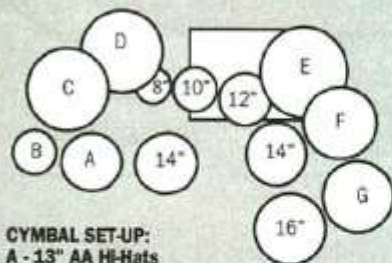


Photo: Pat Rodgers

Mr. Mister's albums 'Welcome to the Real World' and 'Go On' have not only introduced the music world to a great new band, they have also highlighted the tasteful, inventive programming and playing of L.A. drummer, Pat Mastelotto.

Raised on such disparate influences as The Dave Clark Five and Jimi Hendrix, Pat's powerful technique and great pop sensibility have added a degree of real excitement and credibility to the concept of drummers combining both acoustic and electronic percussion in their performance.

Such foresight has not only made him one of a unique new breed, but has also kept him busy on the session front with the likes of Kenny Loggins, Pointer Sisters, The Truth, Scandal and Cock Robin.



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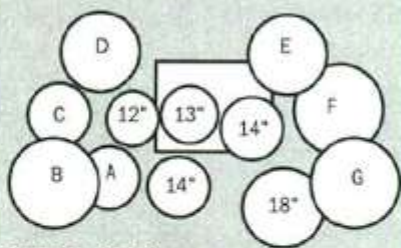
DONNY BALDWIN (Starship)



Photo: Pat Johnson

Donny spent several successful years on tour and recording with the likes of Elvin Bishop (that's him on the soulful classic, 'Fooled Around And Fell In Love'), Pablo Cruise ('A Place In The Sun') and former Doobie Brother, Tom Johnson, before taking up his present spot as drummer and backing vocalist in the ever-popular Starship.

Since joining, Donny's solid R'n'B leanings and no-nonsense rock grooves have integrated with the band's ever-evolving sound, adding, up to some of the best contemporary music of the decade. Songs like 'We Built This City', 'Nothing's Gonna Stop Us Now', and the pulsating punch of 'It's Not Over' have not only re-established the band Stateside, but have topped the charts around the world.



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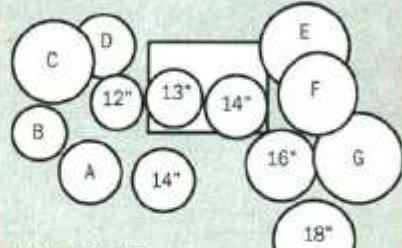
RICHIE HAYWARD (Little Feat, Warren Zevon)



Photo: Pat Rodgers

The percolating funk and blistering rock grooves of Richie Hayward have delighted musicians for years. As a member of Little Feat, one of L.A.'s finest bands, his drumming propelled such great records as 'Feats Don't Fail Me Now', 'Time Loves A Hero' and 'The Last Record Album' into the hearts of listeners the world over.

Along the way he added his indelible style to Robert Palmer's debut LP, 'Sneakin' Sally Through the Alley', and later, 'Steppin' Out', with the eclectic Joan Armatrading. Recording and touring Robert Plant's album, 'Shakin' and Stirred' not only put Richie back into the spot-light with an excellent band, but led to more sessions and, most recently, the drummer's seat on Warren Zevon's 'Sentimental Hygiene' tour.



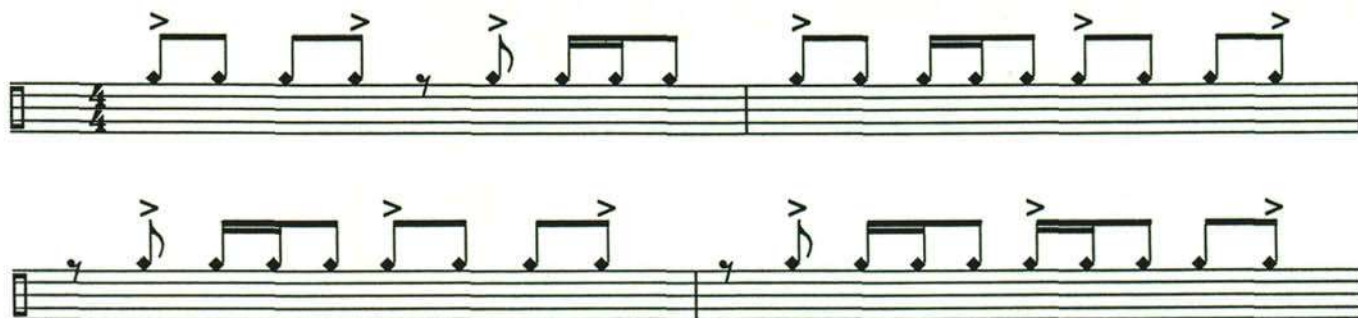
CYMBAL SET-UP
A - 14" AA Flat Hats
B - 12" AA Bell
C - 18" AA Sound Control Crash
D - 14" AA Sound Control Crash
E - 20" AA Medium Ride
F - 18" AA Medium Crash
G - 20" HH Chinese



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Throughout the track, I played a cymbal part on two Paiste 602 Flatrides. A typical example is as follows:



This cymbal part was loosely based on the sequenced keyboard rhythm:



This type of cymbal playing is typical of the way that I played in the original Pat Metheny Group. I was trying to combine the looseness of a jazz drummer with the straight Sth-note rhythms of a rock drummer, and play somewhere in between the two with a lot of sensitivity to the particular song. If you are interested in this type of playing, you might want to check out two drummers who inspired this type of playing in me. One is Airtio (a great example is the *Light As A Feather* recording by Chick Corea), and the other is Bob Moses (any recording, but especially *Dreams So Real* with Gary Burton or *Bright Size Life* with Pat Metheny). They both used flat cymbals, both have elements of rock and jazz, and both have great sensitivity in their playing.

Another interesting example from *Aquamarine* is the song "Waterfall." This song opens with an eight-bar solo, played by me and a great percussionist from Brazil named Cafe. It was based on my studies of Indian rhythms with John McLaughlin and drummer/percussionist Jamie Haddad. With John I learned that it is okay to write drum compositions based on different types of rhythmic combinations, and that you can divide large groups of notes into smaller groups for new ideas and inspiration. A typical example would be to take 16th notes in 4/4 time,

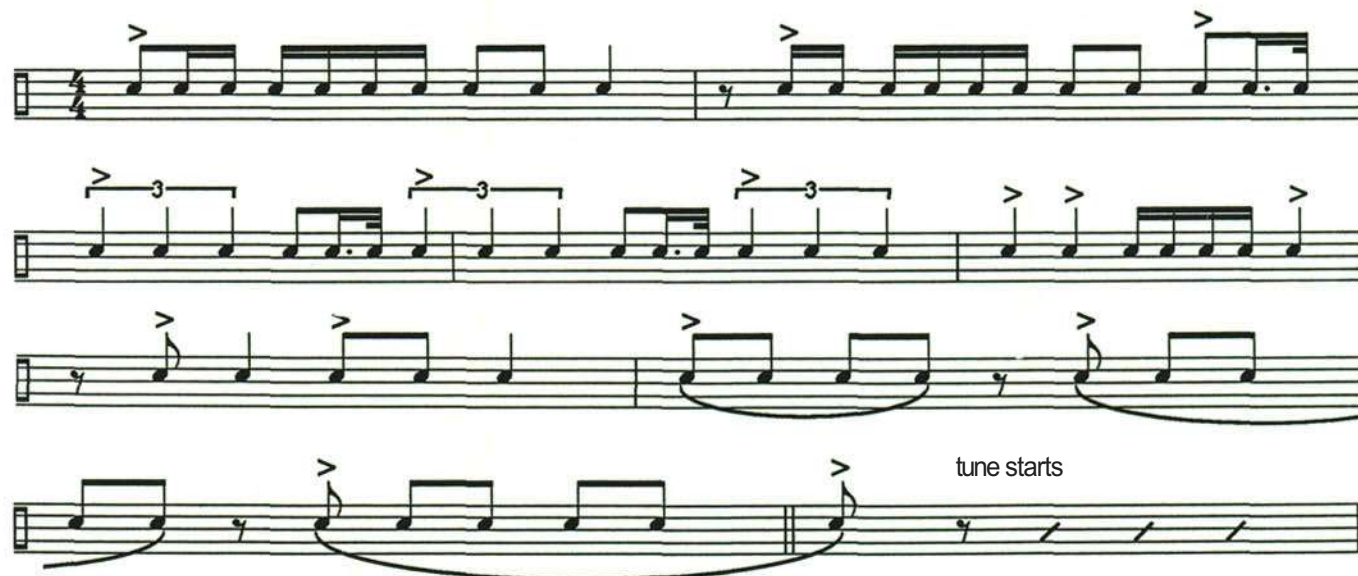


and divide them into different groups, like 6/4/6:

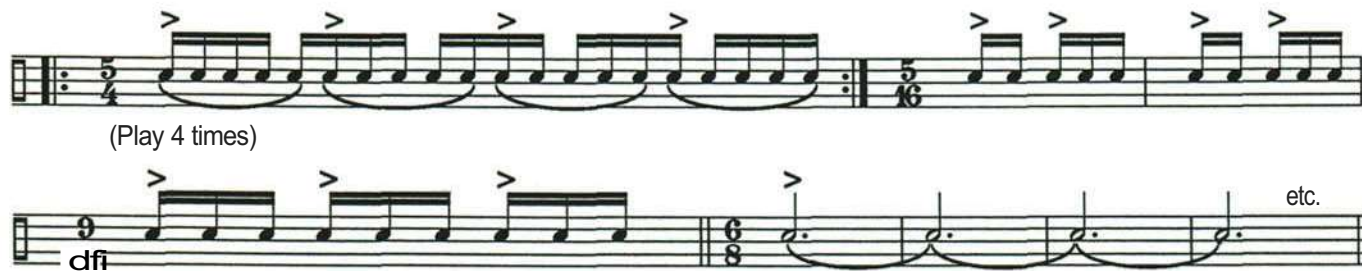


You can then take these smaller groups and write phrases that go over the bar line.

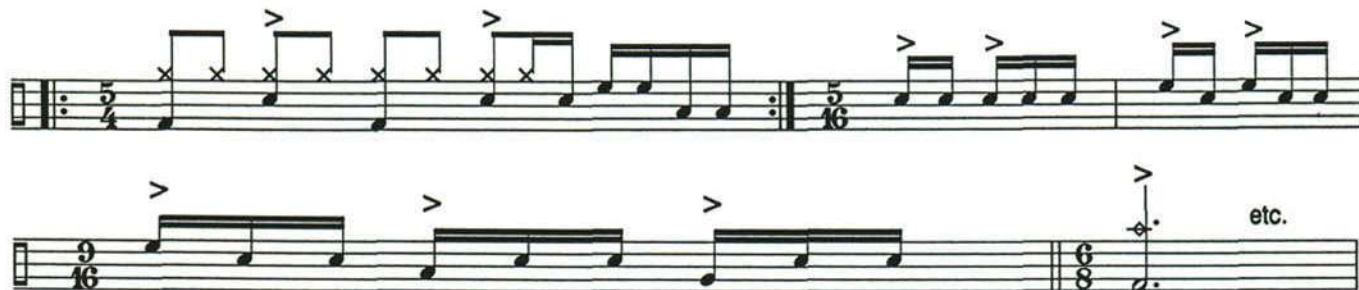
There's more to it than that, but this eight-measure phrase starts the song "Waterfall," and was based on Indian rhythms. In this example you can see phrasing going over the bar line (measures 3-4), and an expansion (four 8th notes, five 8th notes, six 8th notes ending on 1) in measures 7 and 8. I'm just a beginner with these rhythms, but you can see that it opens up a lot of possibilities.



There is another example of these combinations of rhythms on the new Elements Album, *Illumination* (RCA Novus), and it is the basis for the bridge of the song "Go Ahead Stan," featuring guitarist Stan Samole. It is a group of fives in 5/4, and ends with two measures of 5/16 and a measure of 9/16.



The drum part I played was a simple 5/4 rock beat for the 5/4 measures, and then I caught the other figures as best I could:



I hope you enjoy the music. Thanks for listening, and good luck!

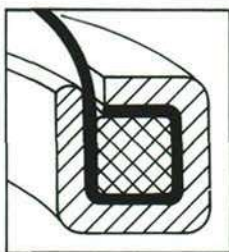


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IN THE STUDIO

Bringing Up The Faders

It's time for the mic's to be brought up on the faders and for you to hit the drums for the engineer. Commonly referred to as "getting a drum sound," this process can cover a myriad of experiences and emotions. Normally, it's a communicative procedure between you and the engineer, while the producer and artist offer their thoughts when some semblance of a drum sound is arrived at.

Remember that communication is very important. The better you and the engineer understand one another, the easier it will be for both of you to reach your goals. An exchange like this:

Engineer: *There seems to be a weird overtone in that drum.*

Drummer: *Okay, I'll try to tune it a little better.*

is a lot better than:

Engineer: *That drum sounds like _____ and whatever your response to that would be! If you can pinpoint certain specifics and discuss them in a reasonable fashion, you'll both be a lot better off.*

I've been part of recording experiences when the drum sound has taken ten minutes, and when it has taken three days! The former was for a TV movie where time simply did *not* exist and sound was not that critical. The latter experience was while working for a drug-and-alcohol crazed engineer and producer who could barely speak coherently, much less determine how the drums should sound. Obviously, the best situation lies somewhere in between. An average amount of time is half an hour to an hour.

Every engineer has his own method for "bringing up the mic's" (turning them on

by raising the fader level on the recording console). A group of engineers I know follow a method that has been passed down over the years and that begins with balancing the overheads. They'll normally say, "Give me some time," which simply means playing a simple bass, snare, and hi-hat pattern without any fills. What they need to do is balance the two overhead mic's covering the left and right sides of the drumset, and make sure both are of equal volume. These mic's are then turned off, but are periodically turned back on to check the overall sound once the snare and each tom sound is pretty close to being a "keeper." This is only one method; other engineers will bring up the overheads last.

It's important for you to play at the level you'll be playing at on the track. Usually the level will rise slightly as you get caught up in the intensity of the music. But you should try to duplicate your levels as close as you can while getting the drum sound. You don't want to surprise the engineer with a drastic level change once the tracking starts; that change could send a drum sound into recorded distortion. Also, the tonal qualities of a drum could be altered with a change in volume.

The bass drum is usually the first drum an engineer will concentrate on. He'll want a simple repetitive pattern, and if he doesn't mind, I usually like to play my snare and hi-hat along with the bass. I find my intensity is better when I play all three, and it's also a good way to loosen up. As with all the drums, the engineer will listen to your bass drum with the

equalizers flat (equalization [EQ] being the boosting or cutting of level at a certain frequency response). With EQ, the engineer will attempt to bring out the most desirable characteristics of the drum. Hopefully, *his* idea and *your* idea of what those desirable characteristics are will be close.

The engineer will also be checking mic' placement. Most engineers will come out of the booth to hear how the drums sound naturally, and to make sure they sound good to begin with. He'll also check the packing of the bass drum, and then reposition the mic' to a spot where he thinks he can capture the best sound.

The more sessions you do, the more you'll appreciate the effect mic' placement has on the sound of your drums. My old bass drum had a strange peculiarity. Nine times out of ten, it would sound drastically better miked on the left side of the drum, with the mic' about two inches inside the drum, than it would miked on the right side. I would always let an engineer try his normal approach of mic' placement first with this drum, but I'd also let him know about its unusual characteristic. That way, if he ran into trouble, he could go with a method that almost always worked. To this day, I haven't figured out *why* the left side of that drum would sound so much better than the right!

Another interesting story about mic' placement occurred when I worked with Larry Levine, Phil Spector's great engineer. Larry would have me hit the drum, and then he'd come out of the booth and move the mic' 'A of an inch or so. I'd play it again and he'd say, "We need more bottom." He'd come out again and move the mic' another fraction of an inch. When he would finally finish, he'd put something down on tape for me to listen to. It was a gigantic, powerful sound. I would then notice that all the equalizers were still flat. He would get *everything* he possibly could out of the drum itself—every bit of its acoustic properties—through careful mic' placement. By the way, he did all this with SA/57's—an inexpensive dynamic mic'! It was a real thrill working with an old master like him.

I've had many different things done to my bass drum. Sometimes a blanket was used to cover half the drum, or *all* of it. A



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DYNACORD SONOR

by Craig Krampf



Photo by Jaeger Kotos

few times, a tunnel was made using mic' stands to hold the blanket, with the mic' placed somewhere inside. This was done to prevent leakage of drums or other instruments into the bass drum mic'. On one particular session, a mic' was placed inside my drum. The head was put back on, and the drum was miked again six inches from the head, and then *again* about six feet away. The engineer wanted a cannon sound, and that's exactly what he got!

All drums react to the various surfaces they sit upon, though I seem to notice it primarily with the bass drum. I love being up on wood—either a well-built riser, or at least a hunk of plywood. I find I get a deeper sound. In all fairness, the drums also sound great on carpets, tile, and even on a huge piece of sheet metal. Again, it depends on all those wonderful variables we've recently become aware of.

For damping, a cut packing blanket works best. It deadens, but maintains enough reflective surface to help the sound. Sponge rubber, foam, and pillows seem to absorb the sound a little too much for my liking.

I hope you truly understand the importance of *communication* in the recording process, and in letting the engineers do what they're going to do. You can't really tell them to do this or that because you'll definitely get branded as having an attitude.

There's a story about the time Paul McCartney hired John Bonham for one of his sessions. Paul and his engineer tried to explain to John that he had to take off his front bass drum head to get the sound they wanted. In so many printable words, Bonham responded with, "I don't do that," and promptly walked out. But until we achieve John's worldwide status, I don't think *any* session musician can afford to do something like that. We can only *suggest* what has worked well with our drums. Until you're the producer or the artist, you'll have to remember your role in the overall scheme of things. The more experience you gain, and the more of a name you establish, the more apt engineers will be to try your suggestions. So let them go ahead and have fun experimenting. Who knows? It just might work!

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BASS CHIMES
VIBRA
BASS DRUM
BASS TONS

DEETLE JUICE

9-7

Tom Tom (Soprano)

BS DRUM (Soprano)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

I played regular chimes all the way through while hitting the low B on bass chimes in bar 61, the low B on bass chimes in bar 67, and the low B on bass chimes in bar 84 until Peter was free to join me in bar 96. This cue took approximately one hour to record, which gives you some idea of the pace of recording a movie cue.

Rec. (9-9) ②

SWISS DRUM

28 29 30 31 32

33 34 35 36 37

38-43 44 45-51 52

53 (VIB. SOLO)

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Pr. 9.7

④

Handwritten musical score for "Black" by The Roots. The score is written on three systems of staves. The first system includes a "Black" section with a "Chorus + Bass Lines" section. The second system includes a "Vibraphone" section. The third system includes a "Gongs" section. The score is written in 4/4 time and features various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

PER. 9-7

(5)

Handwritten musical score for "The Sound of Silence" by Simon & Garfunkel. The score is written on three staves: Chorus, Piano/Bass, and Snare. It includes handwritten notes, dynamics (f, mf), and tempo markings (Chorus, Temp). The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing handwritten numbers (91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98). The score is written in 4/4 time and includes a key signature change to D major (indicated by two sharps).

Ref. 5-7)

(4)

Handwritten musical score for a piece titled "BASS MARIABA". The score is written on multiple staves, with instrument names and measures indicated. The instruments listed include Flute, Clarinet, Bass, and Drums. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing specific notes and rests. The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, notes, rests, and dynamic markings like "p" (piano) and "f" (forte). The score is written in a clear, legible hand, with some corrections and annotations visible.

Page 19.7

(6)

Handwritten musical score for "The Sound of Silence" by Simon & Garfunkel. The score is written on three systems of staves. The first system includes parts for "CHORDS FOR CHORDS", "Vocal", and "BASS" (labeled "BASS" and "BASS"). The second system is for "CHORDS BASS CHORDS". The third system is for "CHORDS BASS CHORDS". The score includes measures 99 through 112, with some measures marked with "R" for repeat or "C" for chorus. The handwriting is in black ink on white paper.

I am also submitting a short cue from *Good Morning Vietnam* by Alex North to show how one of the older composers still comes up with new and fresh ideas for percussion. I remember one score where Alex had me playing on a half-full whiskey bottle with a hard vibe mallet through the entire main title, and it sounded great with the orchestra. On the *Vietnam* cue I played xylophone with triangle beaters while Joe Porcaro played vibes with a bass bow, and Jerry Williams played the cymbal part. I had never played xylo with triangle beaters before, and you must hear that sound to appreciate it.

I want to thank Danny Elfman and Alex North for their permission to use their percussion parts in this article, and for continuing to write and add to the wonderful sounds that are produced by their creativeness in the world of percussion.



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1A 2 3

4 5 6 7 8

(4)

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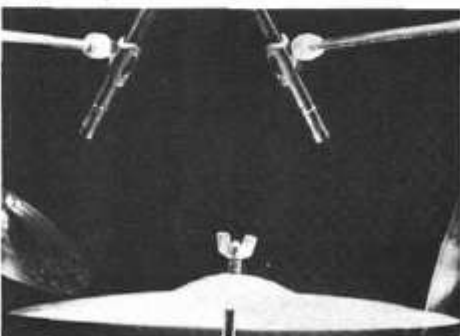
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MIDI Effects De

One of the nice things about playing electronic drums, and MIDI drums in particular, is that effects devices are so easily integrated into the system. Besides the typical devices that most folks are familiar with, MIDI drummers can also access specialized MIDI effects units. These devices fall into two broad categories: more or less "standard" units that may be controlled by MIDI information, and devices that produce their effects via direct manipulation of the MIDI data stream. Each type has its pluses and minuses, as we shall see. Let's take a look at the MIDI-controlled devices first.

MIDI-Controlled Devices

Most musicians are at least somewhat familiar with standard rack effects devices such as delay lines and reverb units. Typically, a delay unit might be set for a specific delay time, an amount of regeneration (feedback or repeats), and perhaps modulation (sweep and width). Generally, the values are static, having been set from front-panel controls or programmed in. If the delay is set for 30 milliseconds, the only way to alter it is to either change the knob setting or call up a new program. What if you wanted to alter the delay time in accordance with some other variable? In that case you would need a control signal and its appropriate hardware tie-in. MIDI can work well in this case. There are a few devices on the market that offer this sort of control. Two such items are the Lexicon *PCM70* and the ART *DRI*. The *PCM70* is perhaps the better known of the two and offers considerable power and flexibility. The *DRI* is also quite versatile and offers excellent performance for the dollar. Both units can produce delays, reverb, and various effects such as flanging. There are, no doubt, other units on the market as well. Units such as these contain MIDI INs and THRUs, as well as audio connections.

About the simplest way to use one of these units via MIDI is by using MIDI program change events to call up programs or presets. This can be very handy when you're on stage. By tying your controller's MIDI output to the effect unit's MIDI IN, a program-change command will not only change the patch on the voice unit, but will also call up the appropriate effect for that preset. It is, of course, up to you to program that appropriate effect. By carefully aligning your effect/voice choices, you could have an entire evening's setups produced without ever touch-

ing the effect unit. Most good units utilize a look-up table scheme to alleviate the drudgery of matching program-change numbers to patch numbers. (This is particularly nasty if you're using several different MIDI units, each responding to program-change messages.) Program-change commands can also maximize the potential of effects devices when used with a sequencer. By inserting the right commands, you can change the effect produced during different parts of a composition. In this way, you are starting to approach an automated mixdown function in the home studio!

Other Forms Of Control

More interesting setups take advantage of other kinds of MIDI information to generate dynamics or variances in the effects. Have you ever changed the delay time of a DDL during mixdown? If so, you know that it's possible to produce some interesting sounds in this manner. Wouldn't it be nice to have something like instrument volume control the delay time, or the regeneration level, or...? By doing this, you get a "third arm," so to speak. The effect parameters now come under the control of your playing! For example, you might want simple thickening (doubling) of your kit during a given section of the music, and obvious echoes during accents. By controlling the delay time via MIDI note-on velocity messages, this effect is available.

What sort of signals could control an effect unit? In theory, any MIDI signal that your pad controller (or sequencer) produces could initiate a parameter change. These would include velocity, note number, pressure, or any of the defined MIDI continuous and switch-type controllers. Instead of using volume (note-on velocity) to control delay time, you could just as easily use note number. In this case, different pads would produce different echo lengths. What kind of parameters might you control? Again, in theory, any parameter that the effect device has is fair game. In the case of a digital reverb this could mean reverb time, high-frequency damping, diffusion, pre-delay, etc. A flanger could have control over delay time, feedback intensity, and the like. As an example, you could have a setup where reverb time is controlled by note number, or where high-frequency damping is controlled by volume (velocity). For maximum flexibility, the amount

of parameter variation is set by a scaling factor. In this way, both subtle and outrageously exaggerated control are possible. Typically, some sort of nominal set point is also provided. This allows your control to be skewed in a given direction. In other words, the overall change in sound may be hardly noticeable at one end of the control range, while at the other end, small changes in the control signal may have a significant sonic impact.

Most good machines will allow you to have more than one controller active at any given time. In other words, with two controllers, you could have the reverb time set by velocity and *simultaneously* have diffusion set by note number. The sonic variations can get quite complex! Don't think that each parameter must have a different controller, either. You might want that diffusion set by velocity instead (and you might even have different scaling factors!). Another variation on this theme is to have different controllers alter the *same* parameter. For example, diffusion could be set by both note number and velocity. The more active controllers the machine has, the crazier the effects can be. The one thing that you must keep in mind is that the effect unit will not distinguish between different *audio* signals. In other words, if you just want to have the reverb on your electronic snare do weird things and everything else be normal, you'll have to route your signals separately. If the effects themselves are rather short (as opposed to long echoes or lush reverb), you may be able to get away with running all of the audio signals through the one effect unit. The problem arises when two different sounds require different settings at approximately the same time. The unit is unable to do this, so it simply updates to the most recent control change and cuts off the preceding effect.

Affecting MIDI Data

Our other major MIDI effect area includes devices that act directly on the MIDI data stream. They achieve their effects by either adding to, subtracting from, or in some manner altering the actual MIDI messages. As an example, let's look at a MIDI echo unit. First, how would you manually produce an echo of a snare strike? Well, after the initial strike, you'd wait a moment and hit the snare again. If you wanted a series of echoes, you could hit the snare a number of times in sync. (This certainly is not too practi-

by Jim Fiore

vices

cal, but you get the idea.) How does this look to the voice unit in terms of MIDI messages? The voice unit receives a series of note-on messages, all with the same note number and equally spaced in time. It is fairly easy to produce a device that will "remember" a note-on message, and after outputting it will wait a while and then output it again. This produces a single echo. By adjusting how long the unit waits and how many times it outputs each input signal, you have mimicked the basic controls of a delay unit (delay time and regeneration amount). The big advantages of these units are their low cost and signal fidelity. Fidelity is actually a misnomer here, since the unit never touches the audio signal. Rather, it simply tells the voice unit to "do it again." This concept can be greatly expanded upon by altering the data components, or, in other words, altering note numbers or velocity values. Thus, a single strike might produce a whole series of different notes. This sort of effect is possible with the Simmons *MTM*. For really intense manipulation, Axxess offers the *Mapper*, which can change data components, add or subtract info, and produce specialized outputs for given inputs. If simple data subtraction is all you need, a variety of data filters are on the market.

Okay, I know what you're thinking: "What's the down side?" Well, the basic problem with using something like a MIDI echo is that it's a voice stealer. Remember, a given voice unit (like a sampler or synth) can only output a given number of notes simultaneously. If you ask it to output more, it will drop the oldest notes. For example, let's say that your tom patch is a bell-like sound that lasts for around three seconds. You decide to set your fancy MIDI echo unit to produce six repeats, each being 1/3 of a second apart. (To make this really nice, let's have each echo be a new note number so that we get a chromatic run.) What happens if your synth has eight voices and you strike two toms together? Well, in that three-second period the synth will attempt to produce 12 notes at the same time. It can't do this, so it drops a few of the original notes in order to produce the later ones. If you remember this, your headaches will certainly be reduced.

Well, that just about does it for our brief tour of MIDI-based effects. As usual, we'll have other interesting MIDI applications in the future.



Art vs. Money.



Howard Kleinfeld
Songwriter,
sound producer,
recording artist,
all-around
musician

"I've made huge compromises in my music before, and I was very unhappy with the outcome. I can't even listen to those records anymore. They weren't me. I was trying to conform to what I felt others wanted to hear. Why even do it if it ends up sounding like someone else?"

It depends on your priorities. Music as a part-time endeavor can be beneficial because it doesn't really require much more of a personal sacrifice than expended brain power. But if you choose it full-time, you've automatically put yourself in the position of doing whatever it takes to make money. And you could still fail. If you fail doing something you love and believe in, at least you had the pleasure of satisfying yourself."



A.J. Altieri
Drummer,
percussionist

"I'm sure I'm like most other musicians when I say I have a certain pride in my playing. It's important to me to establish a unique style and feel in different musical persuasions. I've worked long and hard to perfect my sound. And when I'm asked to do a recording session or gig, I would hope I was chosen for those reasons. However, now and then producers have quite a different idea of the way my part should be played. Of course, I must realize I was hired to do a job. After all, why should artistic compromises be any different than ones made in any other job? I decided long ago that feeding my ego was not worth denying the possibility of creating a comfortable existence for myself."

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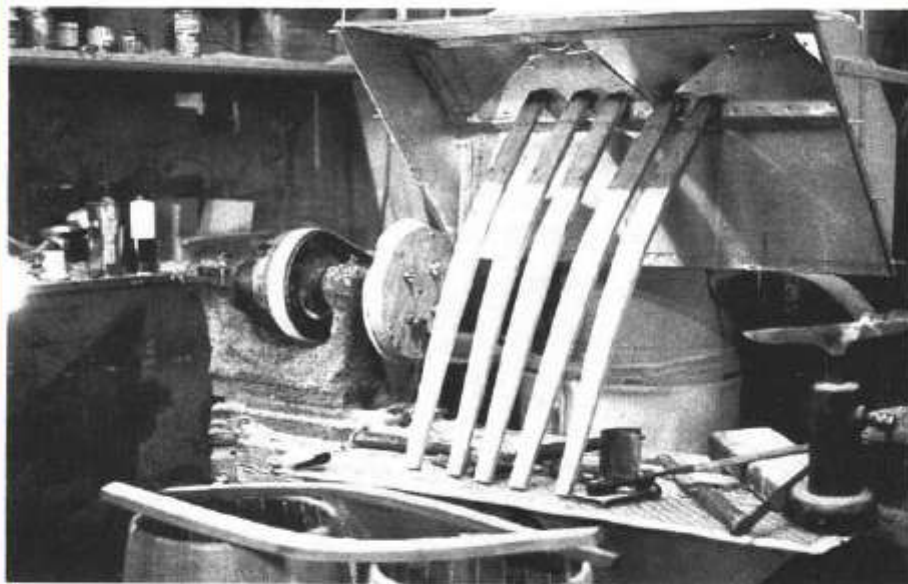
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Skin On Skin



Cut staves placed in front of the lathe. Note the bend of the staves.

These days, it's not hard to notice that everything is becoming more and more mass-produced. People are continually being replaced by computers, while quality materials are discarded in favor of cheap synthetics. With this in mind, it is truly encouraging to know that master craftsman Jay Bereck has been making Skin On Skin conga drums by hand for 11 years. Orders coming into Jay's shop in Brooklyn keep him busy, since each step of construction is done slowly and with care; to rush the job would inevitably take away from the beauty and power that these drums possess. Mongo Santamaria, Ray Barretto, Daniel Ponce, Tommy Lopez, Little Ray Romero, and Pancho Sanchez are just some of the leading percussionists who own Skin On Skin congas.

Originally a construction worker by trade, Jay was working as a sheet metal apprentice in 1959. At the same time, he was playing congas with his band, Los

Congeros. He also opened up a coffee shop called Cafe Samarkand, where he held open rumba and jazz sessions. According to Jay, "I was always interested in making drums, and I always knew I would—someday."

That day came in 1976, when Jay was laid off from his job. He started experimenting with drummaking in his basement. Since he owned no power equipment, the drums were made completely by hand. Jay's first drum was made out of a beechwood herring barrel. With no lathe, Jay had to smooth the surface with a spokeshave. It didn't take him long to realize that drummaking was going to be a full-time business. He decided on the name for his drums after listening to a radio interview with Chano Pozo, during which Chano said, "There's nothing like the sound of skin on skin."

Skin On Skin congas are modeled after such Cuban congas as Aguerra, Solis, and, most notably, Vergarra—all of which became unavailable in America after Fidel Castro's takeover in the late '50s. Combining a deep respect for tradition with a strong sense of his own ideas, Jay refined his drum design into what it is today. Yet even though Jay has his method of construction "down to a science," he is continually perfecting the details. "The primary function of any instrument is sound," says Jay. "By that I mean quality and volume. The second is performance: tuning, portability, and the capacity to be easily maintained over the years."

The process of constructing a conga

drum goes something like this: After selecting the wood (drums are available in quarter-sawn oak, black cherry, ash, or spruce), staves are rough-cut according to a template, and all visible defects are removed. Bevels are then cut to form the circumference of the drum. Next, the conga is steam-bent into shape and placed over an open flame to set the bend. After the drum has been stored for a period of time to reach shop equilibrium, it is taken apart and glued. The glue sets for two days, after which the drum is turned on a lathe to achieve proper stave thickness and to smooth its surface.

Wood absorbs moisture, expanding when the air is humid and contracting when the air is dry. In order to combat this spontaneous wood movement, the drumshells are immersed in a stabilizing medium. Next, several coats of oil or varnish (depending on the desired finish) are applied by brush. Says Jay, "Originally, the finish was applied to both the inside and outside of the drum. However, I found that coating the inside created a distortion of sound similar to the sound of drums made of synthetic material or laminates such as plywood."

The hardware Jay installs on his drums is available in either a black anodized finish or highly polished chrome. Cold-rolled or stainless steel bands hand-riveted together are mounted first. These are followed by the side cleats, through which the tuning hooks will pass. The cleats are made of 1/8" cold-rolled steel backed by thick steel plates and washers installed on the inside of each drum. The 3/8" steel hooks are forged blacksmith-style: heated red-hot and hammered into shape. According to Jay, the advantage of this method is that the hook will never straighten or break. The rims for Skin On Skin congas are also of cold-



Raw drumshells, before they are glued.



Finished conga shells, ready for the mounting of hardware.

Percussion

rolled steel, hand-rolled on a metal roller. The ears are hand-riveted onto the rims using solid steel rivets. Jay feels that this meticulously handcrafted hardware provides the most precise and durable tuning capability possible.

Two innovations featured in Jay's design are a rubber bumper applied to the bottom of each conga (for protection and to provide stability while playing), and an "alma" (steel ring) on the inside top of each conga barrel. Jay feels that this ring helps the drum keep its shape, and also brings out the drum's bass tones.

The final step in construction is the mounting of the skin head. Jay selects the finest quality American rawhide available and mounts each skin carefully, pulling it into position over a few days. (Jay also makes Cuban-style bata drums, Dominican-style tamboras, and Bongo Bells [hand-held cowbells] with the same attention to detail and quality.)

It's difficult today to find instruments that are still handcrafted and that consistently maintain high quality standards throughout the years. Jay Bereck's attention to detail allows him to offer such instruments. For percussionists playing Skin On Skin congas (or any other brand), Jay also offers the following tips to maximize drum life and performance:

1. Lubricate tuning hardware frequently with a solvent such as WD-40.
2. Tune and de-tune evenly.
3. Change the skin when it is very stretched. Do not add a bunch of washers to the tuning hooks.
4. Store congas away from extreme heat or cold, and protect them by covering them with a plastic bag.



Finished drums (l. to r.): oak conga with chrome hardware; cherry conga with black anodized hardware; oak conga with chrome hardware and stainless steel bands.

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Jay Bereck holding a completed conga rim.



Childs continued from page 25

because it was great, but it was exhausting.

RF: The Julian Lennon gig came through Carmine.

AC: Carmine did one track on Julian's first album. Again, Julian said to Carmine, "Put the band together with whoever you think would be right on drums, and we'll try it." I went down with Carmine, met Julian, we played, and it was just great. It was the thrill of my life.

RF: Considering your love for the Beatles, what did that feel like?

AC: I was really shy around him at first, but so was he. It took time. One of the first times on the tour bus I was sitting in the back with Julian and a cassette player, and it wasn't until this time that I spoke to him about his father. I was really nervous. I told him how *heavily* I was into the Beatles. I had every album, and I knew every breath they took in between words and every little sound. I knew everything about the Beatles, and especially about John. Julian was playing me demos of songs that didn't get on his first album, and there was one song where I had to say to him, "Julian, is that your father?" And I know the Beatles. This was *so* John. He said, "No, it's a song we didn't do on the album." When you get to know Julian and his music more, you can tell the difference, of course.

RF: The similarity in their voices is uncanny.

AC: He's really so talented. The second album was rushed, so there wasn't much time to do it. He had all those years to get his first album together. Then we did the first tour, and a month and a half after it ended, he was expected to go into the studio to start the second album. That isn't enough time to have material ready, but I think there are some great things on the album. Now he's had over a year to get the third album together. I've heard some of the songs, and they're the best things he's ever written. I'm looking forward to it.

RF: How did he respond when you told him you were a major fan of the Beatles?

AC: He was happy. We never talk about it much, but once in a while it comes up. What was really great was that he played me tapes of John's that never got released—an acoustic version of "Strawberry Fields" and completely different versions of other songs. That was a thrill!

RF: Julian's first album was done with two other drummers. Were you under any pressure to recreate those parts?

AC: No. We did the first tour, and when that was over, Julian said he wanted the band to do the second album. It wasn't an ideal situation cutting the second album, although there were some great moments. I'm just looking forward to the next one.

RF: How much input did you have?

AC: I was allowed to do pretty much what I wanted, but there were some boundaries with the producer. There were a couple of songs that the band really had a lot to do with. The whole feel of "Stick Around" was pretty much the band. Julian played the line, and we came in with the feel. That came out great. "Let Me Tell You" is real nice, and "I've Seen Your Face" is one I like a lot.

RF: On the road, which songs did you enjoy playing?

AC: Many. The second tour was songs from both albums. "Coward Till The End" was great to play live. There's kind of an eerie mood to the song, and it reminded me a little of John. "Stick Around" was great live, and the whole show was a ball to play. We did "Day Tripper," which was a gas, and there were a couple of songs on the first album that we changed live. "Too Late For Goodbyes" turned into a real fast kind of reggae thing.

RF: What does Julian need from a drummer?

AC: He likes the drummer to be creative and have good time, and he enjoys some personality as well. He plays drums a bit, so he likes when the drummer takes it out

a little. Sometimes I do some strange fills, and the band will turn around and say, "What was that?" But he likes it.

RF: Like on what?

AC: Maybe on "Day Tripper" I would do something that you wouldn't expect, but it would fit in a funny kind of way.

RF: You're still a band member.

AC: Yes. This year the plans are for the album to be released, and in the summer, we'll do a nice big tour.

RF: Back to the issue of being in a band vs. being a sideman. Where do you stand with that?

AC: I see myself continuing to be a sideman for another couple of years. If there were time to pursue something on my own, I would. There were the beginnings of that with the keyboard player from Julian's band, but there's just never enough time to go through with it, because I'm doing something and he's doing something. Maybe a year or two down the road we can pursue it, but right now I'm happy where I'm at.

RF: You seem to work for a lot of English people.

AC: Probably 98% of the people I work with are English.

RF: Why do you think that is?

AC: I guess the thing that makes me a little different is that my roots are in British rock, and I'm from New York. So maybe I have some of the New York attitude but with British roots.

RF: Is it different playing for Brits than Americans?

AC: I really don't play with enough Americans to say. Nona Hendryx was American, but she was looking for that different kind of thing; she didn't want a real R&B drummer. She wanted a drummer who was more rock. Some drummers from New York weren't into the British Invasion at all—that whole style of Keith Moon, Mitch Mitchell, and Ginger Baker—so you don't hear that in their playing. I hear it in mine when I listen to tapes. I can kind of pinpoint certain things that I do and where they came from. There was a period of the Steve Gadd influence and that whole thing, which is totally different from the British thing, and that I got heavily into for a little while.

RF: Who were the main drummers?

AC: Gadd, Harvey Mason, and David Garibaldi. I was into the jazz stuff, too, for a while, like Tony Williams. I used to go see him, and I'd feel like giving up. I think the mixture of all these drummers—Tony Williams, Gadd, and Ginger Baker—must have something to do with it. Some drummers were into Gadd or Elvin or Tony, and they weren't interested in that other thing. I'm happy with the combination of influences I've had.

RF: What happened after the second Julian Lennon tour?

AC: I did a couple of tracks on a Belouis Some album. The first album I shared with

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You Can Make Music

Tony Thompson, and that was the first time I worked with Carlos Alomar, who is the musical director for David Bowie. He's been with David for something like 15 years. He wrote "Fame" along with John Lennon and David, and he's written a few others with David. He was the musical director on the Belouis Some tracks that I did.

RF: How did you get that gig?

AC: I had just gotten off the road when Carmine was called by Carlos to do Belouis Some. Carlos had seen us play together with John Waite, so he suggested that Carmine ask me to do that. That was the first time with Carlos, which led to what's happening now.

RF: When did this come up with Bowie?

AC: Last March.

RF: When was the Belouis Some thing?

AC: Two years before that.

RF: Then for the Bowie thing, you were approached by Carlos?

AC: Yes. There was this band that was pretty much like Julian's, but with a different singer, that we put together just to fool around in New York and play places like the China Club. Carlos was coming down to these gigs, and at the end of the show he'd come up and jam with us. It was during that time Carlos mentioned to me that he would consider me for the gig with David. Nothing was definite, but I knew I was in the running.

RF: Did you have to audition?

AC: No. Carlos is the musical director, so David trusts him. Of course, when the time comes to play, if David doesn't like somebody, he'll say it. There was a press tour in March for two weeks where we played ten countries in 15 days. The press would be in a little club, thinking David would be on a little stage, taking questions from the press. David had the band come with him on this tour, which was Europe, Spain, Rome, and England. The record company would have their little speech, the *Pepsi Cola* rep would say something, there would be a curtain, they'd finish with their speeches in ten minutes, and then they'd say, "Ladies and Gentlemen, David Bowie." The curtain would open and the band would be playing "Day-in Day-out," and the people would have their mouths open. That little tour was so great—small clubs, little equipment, the audience up close.

RF: How many tunes did you do?

AC: Two.

RF: What an expensive little tour.

AC: We'd come out, do "Day-in Day-out," stop, and everyone in the front line would take a stool. David would say, "I'll take questions for anybody in the band," and this would go on for 15 or 20 minutes. Then David would say, "Okay, last question," and we'd do "Bang Bang" or "87 and Cry." We'd finish the song and go off. That was such a thrill.

RF: Why is it so much fun to do small

clubs like that?

AC: After the past few years of doing theaters and small arenas—which are a thrill too, of course—getting more intimate and seeing the people in the club is great. The stage is smaller, so the band is together, which has a lot to do with it. It was a feeling of brotherhood, which was great.

RF: The percussionist is so far away on the Bowie stage.

AC: The whole thing is so huge. You should have seen the arenas we played—Wembley Stadium, not Wembley Arena. Wembley Stadium holds over 80,000 people. I personally think it's a little too big to get the sound and the visuals—especially this show, which is very theatrical with five dancers. The arenas were much better for sound, and you could see everything. In the stadiums, I think you miss half the show.

RF: Is it difficult for you to be so far away from the other players?

AC: Just in spirit. When I'm playing, I have everybody in my monitors, so I do hear everything. But there's a spirit that's missing a little, as opposed to that club stage where everybody was together. That was a great feeling, and that's what we missed when it got so large.

RF: What things do you have to take into account when you're playing stadiums?

AC: You're playing for anywhere from 40,000 to 90,000 people. The Bowie tour was the first time I ever did that. The first show in Rotterdam was a stadium, so I was a bit nervous. I had to adapt my playing to be a little more linear, where I would try not to put the little grace notes in. By linear, I mean kind of like a compressor unit, where it's almost one level, which I really don't like. There are some dynamics, and there are ways to work around it, like when you're doing a buildup on all the drums. On the beginning of "Let's Dance," where it builds up, instead of coming in on all the drums and building up to a crescendo, I came in with one drum at a time to make it sound like it was crescendoing. You find ways to go around it.

RF: Did you have to be concerned with the theatrics?

AC: There were some cues from the dancers jumping off a scaffolding where I would come in on the downbeat, like on "Fashion." There were a couple of other songs where we did that, but we actually learned other songs in place of those. Playing songs like "Rebel Rebel" with David is great, because I used to listen to him; he was one of my influences. I have a lot of his albums, and when I got called to do it, I was thrilled.

RF: What is the difference between playing with Julian and playing with David?

AC: There's a big difference. Julian is more mellow, musically. It's still demanding in certain ways, but I even used brushes on "Space," from Julian's first album. That's a bit unusual. With David, it

was a bit more aggressive and a much longer show—over two hours—so my stamina had to be up.

RF: How do you maintain that stamina?

AC: I'm working out now, and I'm actually staying in shape. Every hotel has a health club, so I work out with the Universal equipment for about an hour.

RF: Why did you start doing that?

AC: I felt I needed it. I don't think I was physically in shape before the tour, so I just started doing it. I'm sure I was hitting harder, although I wasn't hitting hard bombastically. I was just hitting stronger, and it felt good when I did that.

RF: Your equipment with Bowie was very different than it was with Julian.

AC: I was triggering an Akai sampler with an *MXJ* trigger unit. We were playing such big places, and we had the opportunity to use different sounds for different songs, but I always did it via the acoustic drums—no pads. I like hitting a drum, so I'll always use the acoustic drums.

RF: Detail your setup.

AC: I used 8", 10", and 12" tom-toms, and instead of a 16" floor tom, I used a 14", which really sounds great. For the first time, I used a double bass drum pedal. On David's new album, which is all electronic with some acoustic overdubs, there are a lot of double bass drum patterns. I used to play double bass drum a long time ago when Cream was popular, and I thought I was Ginger Baker.

RF: Why the double pedal and not two bass drums?

AC: I didn't want so many drums on the stage. I like to keep it compact. I feel better about it that way. The number of pieces I had was perfect, and it covered the whole spectrum of tom-tom sounds.

RF: How much practicing with the double bass drum pedal did you have to do?

AC: Before the tour, I went to Drummers Collective in New York and practiced for two weeks.

RF: How do you feel about the triggering?

AC: I like triggering, although I had a problem with dynamics. That can be worked out, though, I think. I'm going to be searching for a unit that is dynamically sensitive.

RF: What are the benefits of triggering?

AC: You can change the sounds of the kit at the press of a button. I use it in conjunction with the acoustic drums, so I have it as a padding. You blend the acoustic drum with the electricity and power of the sample, which is what I like.

RF: What cymbals do you use?

AC: Zildjian. I like the *Platinums*, and the Z ride has a great bell. I'm always happy with Zildjian cymbals.

RF: In a situation like Bowie's, where it's really theatrical and the production is really big, do you feel sometimes you get lost in the shuffle?

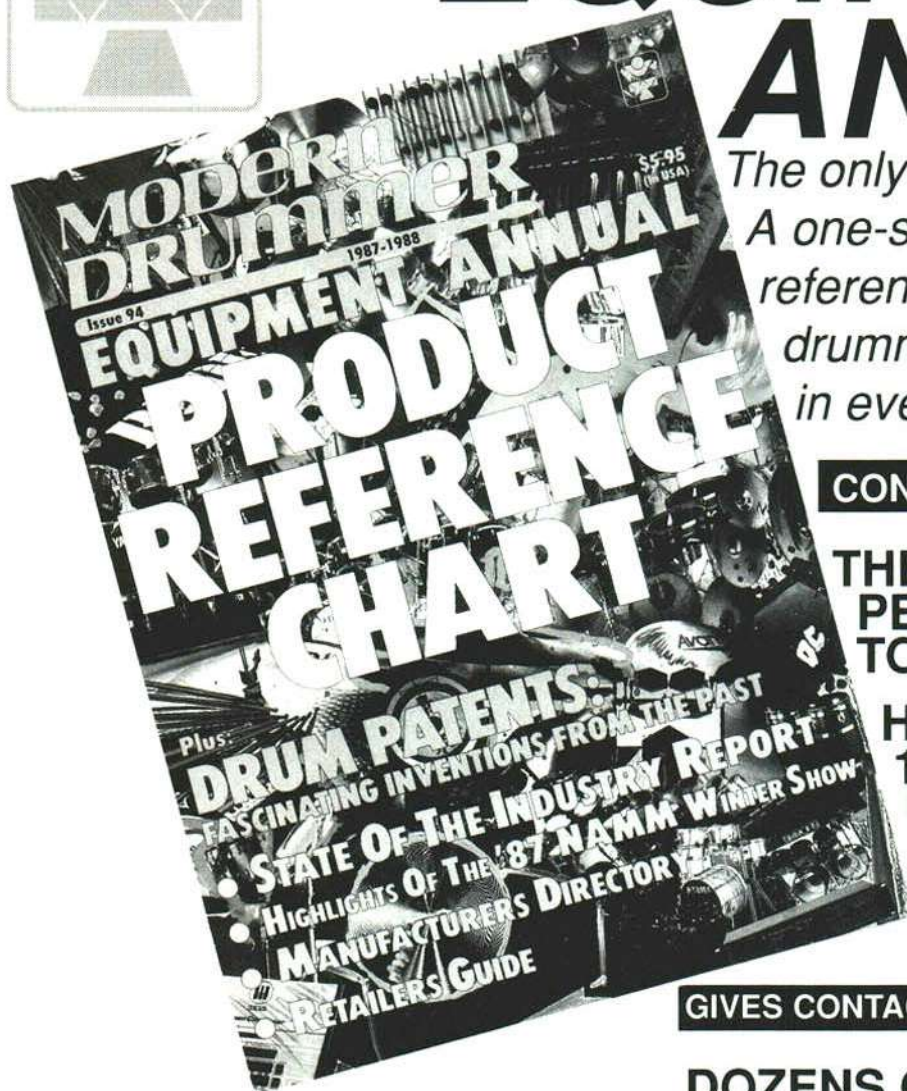
AC: It's been said sometimes that the band gets a little lost. But there were parts of

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the show where it was just the band on stage. David's ideas with the dancing and everything were great. I think it made for a very enjoyable evening for the audience. It was a little different than just having the band come up and play, which is great, too. But David's creative mind is coming up with these ideas all the time, and I think it's great that he saw it executed the way he conceived it.

RF: How much input did you have with Bowie?

AC: Not very much, but there were a couple of things. Plus, if I wanted to have input, that would have been fine. No one said not to say anything. I said a few things. During rehearsals and getting the songs and arrangements together, we could come up with something that everybody liked, and they'd try it.

RF: What were your favorite things to play?

AC: I swear, almost the whole show. Really.

RF: Were some more creative than others?

AC: Yes, there were a couple. There's one song called "Beat Of Your Drum" on the

new album that has a real interesting pattern with offbeats on the China cymbal, and double bass drums go through the whole song. It's a cool beat, and that was fun to play.

RF: Bowie has some strange song structures at times.

AC: On a couple of tunes it changes to a whole different feel, like on "All The Madmen," a song from an older album. It was a big stage production with the dancers, and the song goes from a tom-tom oriented beat in 4/4 time into an African shuffle, right in the middle of the tune. Then, out of nowhere, it goes back to the original feel. But it works.

RF: Did you have to learn to play the songs pretty much straight to the recordings?

AC: That was just a guideline, and we would change things as we went along. When we got together with the dancers, they had to make some changes because we weren't playing exactly like the record. The recordings were the basis for all of us to learn the song, but we changed whatever we wanted. We changed the arrange-

ments, and some of the tempos and feels. That was fun. If I listen to some of the original recordings now, some of the songs don't match up.

RF: What songs changed a lot?

AC: There's a song called "Time," which we did completely different. It was heavier. "All The Madmen" was completely different, and we changed a few things in "Big Brother." The first part of the song stayed pretty close to the original, but in the last half of the song, I changed the beat completely, and then there was a drum solo. So it was very different from the record.

RF: How did that drum solo come about?

AC: One day Carlos mentioned that we should have a drum solo and then a percussion solo. David had to do a costume change in the middle of that song, so it was the perfect song to do it in.

RF: What was your objective in the solo?

AC: I like to get the crowd going, because it's entertainment, too. As I first started doing the solo, I kind of found the things the crowd liked, like when you do double bass drum patterns and incorporate the

Readers' Platform continued from page 4

would sound like a thicker version of the *Classic Clear with Power Dot*." Mr. Van Horn states that his "feeling about head sounds should be taken as indications, not scientific analyses." I quite agree. I think it would, in fact, be impossible to be scientific when your facts are so scrambled to begin with.

We test our heads in real playing situations (such as concerts, nightclubs, and recording studios) with everyday "working" drummers. We have also had the input and feedback from great players such as Gil Moore, Vinny Appice, Stu Nevitt, and Joey Farris, all of whom have helped us develop our heads. How did Mr. Van Horn test them—by "tapping" on them in a small room? It would be interesting to know.

At any rate, when Mr. Van Horn reviews a product line in the future, I strongly suggest that he do his homework by at least reading the current catalog of the manufacturer. I also suggest that he could have reviewed Aquarian drumheads without A/B comparisons with another company. Aquarian heads have their own sound and are fully capable of standing on their own. Just ask some of the drummers who are already using them.

Roy Burns
Owner, Aquarian Accessories Corp.
Anaheim CA

Rick Van Horn replies: Both Mr. Belli's and Mr. Burns' points regarding the differences in Mylar and in aluminum are well taken, and while I don't think that my

statements necessarily implied that the materials used in Aquarian and Remo Heads were identical, I appreciate the clarification. However, I feel I need to address the additional points made by Mr. Burns.

In regard to Mr. Burns' complaint that the review was an "A/B comparison" with Remo, I clearly stated in the review—once near the outset and a second time at the conclusion—that no direct, qualitative comparison to Remo heads was either intended or implied. As to my 13 references to Remo: When a heretofore unknown product (such as the Aquarian heads) comes on the market, it seems advantageous to both the product and its potential consumers to employ some well-known point of reference in order to present the clearest possible image of the new product. Never in the review was an Aquarian head said to perform "better" or "worse" than a Remo head (as an A/B comparison would most certainly have done). Cosmetic similarities were pointed out for the purpose of visualization, and acoustic similarities were mentioned in the most general terms to give the reader a ballpark concept of what the heads sounded like. Describing the sound of any musical instrument in print is approximate at best, and always subject to interpretation and dispute.

Regarding the "hoop" controversy, Mr. Burns is correct in saying that I used the term "molded hoop." I also pointed out, a few lines later, that the hoop was made of aluminum, and that Aquarian's method of "molding the head into the hoop" was quite different from Remo's. Since I am

not a drumhead manufacturer, the word "molded" means something quite different to me than it apparently does to Mr. Burns. He and I had discussed the fact that Aquarian's head was made differently from any other, and that much of that difference lay in the hoop design. The literature that I had to work with at the time MD's survey was done was, in fact, what Mr. Burns now points out to be Aquarian's older literature. This included the description of a "molded hoop" that was quoted in the first part of the review. Since the heads that were sent to us came with aluminum hoops—but were not accompanied by new literature of any kind—I had no reason to think that there was any new literature. Consequently, I took the description of a "molded" head to mean the process by which the Mylar sheet was "fastened"... "attached"... "put together"... "assembled"... or any other similar term... to the aluminum hoop. Since the word "molded" was used in the literature from Aquarian, "molded" was the term used in the review.

As to my "not doing my homework," let me reiterate that when the heads were supplied, there was no accompanying literature any newer than the catalog/price list we already had on hand—and no indication that any existed. Therefore, there was no reason to make any "quick phone calls" to ask about changes in hoop design or the development of a high-tension steel hoop for marching drums. (Such development is academic in terms of our pull-out test, anyway. A product test can only be applied to those products we are sent, not those under development. We tested current production

tom-toms, it sounds like a hundred drums at once. They like flashy, show-off kinds of things.

RF: What was it like working with Frampton?

AC: He's great. I used to go see him at the Fillmore East in New York when he was with Humble Pie. I play guitar a bit, and he was a big influence on my playing. He was one of my favorites for a long time because he didn't play the regular cliché rock blues licks; he played a more jazz style. At the first rehearsal with David, it was really a pleasure to meet him. And he's a funny guy, too.

RF: You work with Carmine Rojas quite a bit. What do you like in a bassist/drummer relationship?

AC: First of all, we have the same backgrounds, musically. If you looked at our record collections, it would be 90% the same. That has a lot to do with it. The first time we played together, we automatically locked in; our two brains were as one. It was really great. We play the same style on different instruments, plus, we get along as friends really well. He

dragged me into all this. Carmine and I have been together four and a half years, and we've done the John Waite tour, two tours with Julian, and a tour with David.

RF: What do you think about when you approach a song—the vocalist, locking in with the bass...?

AC: I listen to the whole thing—every instrument—and try to lock it all together. I always have to hear the vocalist because that's the inspiration, but as far as locking in, I hope everyone else is trying to lock in with me, too. Usually there's no problem with that. Carmine and I lock in together all the time.

RF: What have been some of your musical highlights?

AC: I once worked with guitarist Bill Connors, who was the first electric guitar player in Chick Corea's band Return To Forever. Right before John Waite, someone gave him my name, and I played with him in his loft in New York. I was really into fusion music, and still am a bit. He was my favorite guitar player out of all those guys, so when I played with him that first day, it was one of my biggest

thrills. He had charts of his own songs, and I worked with him for a few months and did some shows in New York. Then I got the call for John Waite, and I had to go ahead with that.

RF: What other highlights have there been?

AC: John, Julian, and David are certainly all highlights for me.

RF: What has been the most creative thing you've done?

AC: I'd say Bill Connors. It was creative in the sense that there were charts, and we interpreted them the way we wanted to. I followed the chart, but the solos and the groove were up to me. Pop music is pretty much straight ahead where you can be creative, but it's a different kind of creativity.

RF: So what's your goal?

AC: My goal is to keep playing with good quality players like I've been doing, to enjoy the music I'm playing, which fortunately has been the situation for the past few years, and maybe one day to do something on my own with my best musical buddies.



drumset heads sent to us by every manufacturer in our survey. The test was applied to a representative snare batter head from each line—not particularly to heads designed for marching use.)

Comments I made pertaining to Aquarian's Power Dot head seem to corroborate, rather than conflict with, what Mr. Burns says in his letter. He states that Aquarian was going for a "warmer, fuller, deeper sound" since many players had expressed dissatisfaction with the attack sound of a plastic or Mylar dot. I stated that Aquarian's dot "mellows out the sharp, high-pitched impact sound of the tip of a stick on the Mylar head, thus muffling the 'attack' of the head." Those two statements sound pretty similar to me. I was very careful to qualify my remaining comments with the admission that I don't care for heads with dots in general. I certainly made no implication whatsoever that Remo's CS Black Dot heads were in any way superior to Aquarian's Power Dots; I merely pointed out the difference in overall effect that each dot has on its respective head. I further qualified my points regarding snare drum use with the statement that there was nothing inherently wrong with the effect of Aquarian's dots, and that the Power Dot head's sound might be perfect for certain applications.

My comments regarding the Studio-X did not compare the head to Remo's Pinstripe, but rather contrasted the two. As did Mr. Burns in his letter, I pointed out the differences in plies, and the quality of sound produced as a result. I agreed that the single-ply head produced "good attack and

brightness." The dispute over whether reducing "ring" does or does not also reduce "volume" or "projection" is a very old one, with proponents on either side. I disagree with the fundamental principles on which Mr. Burns bases the statements he makes in his letter. As I stated in the review, I don't believe that reducing any part of a drumhead's performance can add volume. I agree that a muffled head can have more definition than one allowed to ring; this is why drumheads on concert stages and in studios are often muffled. But natural volume and projection are sacrificed in order to obtain that clarity, which is why drums on concert stages and in studios are close-miked. The Aquarian heads—along with all the others included in MD's survey—were tested in unmiked conditions in order to gain the greatest perception of how the heads performed alone—unprocessed and unamplified by any sound system. Under those conditions, the Studio-X heads performed as described in the review.

As far as referring to "nonexistent heads" when I suggested how Hi-Performance heads might sound on tom-toms, again I was referring to the catalog/price list on hand at the time of the survey. Since no new information came with the heads, there was no reason to believe that the listings shown were incorrect, and Hi-Performance heads were shown in all sizes. I deemed it appropriate to speculate on their performance on tom-toms, since I did not have the heads to test. My comment was theoretical, and I said so.

I would like to point out—since Mr.

Burns raises the question—that all the heads tested in our survey were played in both "laboratory" and "field" conditions, with and without a band. This included use on a number of professional gigs. I'd also like to point out that, although my byline appeared at the end of the review, several MD editors worked with all of the drumheads surveyed in a very deliberate attempt on our part to avoid any personal bias in the final assessment. The performances of the heads were compared and discussed, and the reviews—although summarized and written by one person—reflected a consensus opinion.

I regret that Mr. Burns feels that Aquarian's heads were poorly presented in this review. MD's policy is, and always has been, to examine any product thoroughly, and to present our findings in the clearest and most objective manner possible. Generally speaking, the review of Aquarian heads was quite favorable.

We also feel it incumbent upon the manufacturers of the products we review to provide us with the most up-to-date and complete information possible pertaining to their products, in order to avoid inaccuracies such as Mr. Burns complains of. A reviewer cannot be responsible for what takes place within a product line between the time he or she receives a test model and the publication of the review. It is not up to a reviewer to contact a manufacturer to see if a catalog or price list has changed at the last minute; it is up to the manufacturer to make sure that the reviewer is supplied with that information.



by Rod Moraenstein

In Pursuit Of Odd Time: Part 1



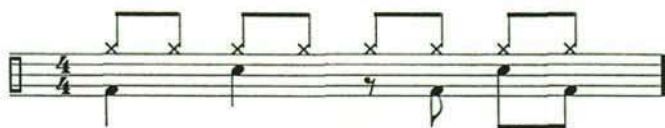
Photo by Rick Makin

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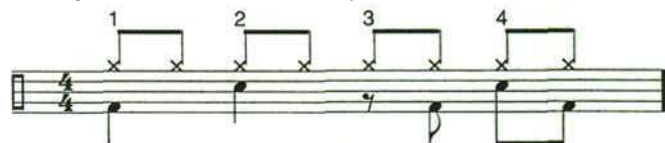


It's time to attack odd time head-on! Odd time exists in all styles of music, covering the spectrum from pop to metal. So it's probably not a bad idea to get a solid grasp of what it's all about, since chances are you're going to meet up with it sooner or later.

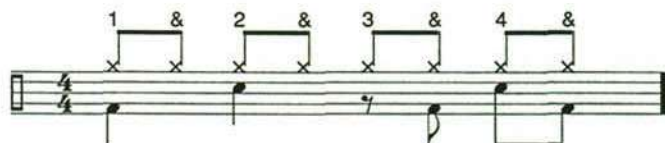
Let's look at the following beat:



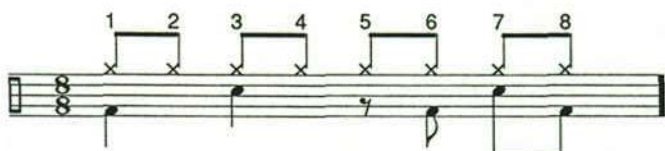
In gathering some basic information, we see that this pattern is in 4/4, which means that there are four beats or counts in the measure, and that a quarter note gets one full beat or count. The counting can be illustrated this way:



If we look at the hi-hat part, we see that it consists of eight 8th notes, and they are counted in the following way:

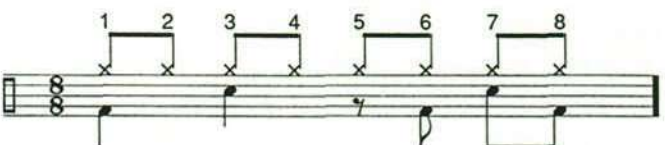


Well, believe it or not, there is another way to count this very same beat, if we so choose. If each 8th note is given a full count, we have eight beats or counts in the measure, with an 8th note receiving one full beat or count. This pattern (which sounds exactly the same as the preceding examples) is now written in 8/8 and is counted in the following manner:

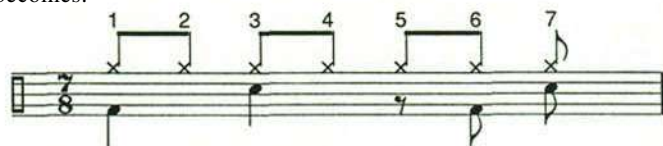


Amazing? Well, not that amazing. The point is, 4/4 and 8/8 are equivalent time signatures that sound identical. The only difference is that in 4/4, we count 8th notes "1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &," and in 8/8, we count 8th notes "1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8."

Let's see what happens if we leave off the last 8th note of the beat that we've been working with.

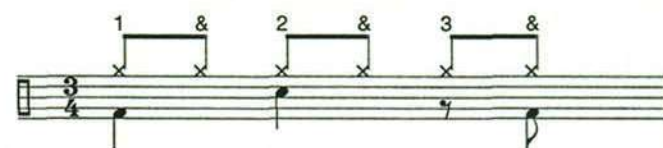


becomes:

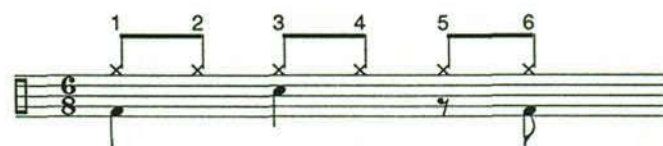


Now we have created an odd-time signature (7/8) by simply removing the last 8th note of our previous example.

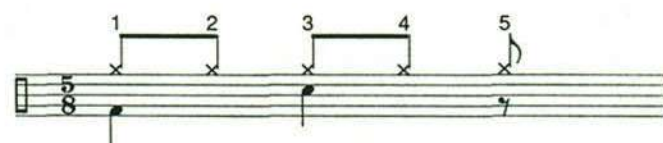
Let's experiment with this idea further by taking a standard-meter beat and removing the last 8th note from it.



is equal to:



By removing the last 8th note, it becomes:



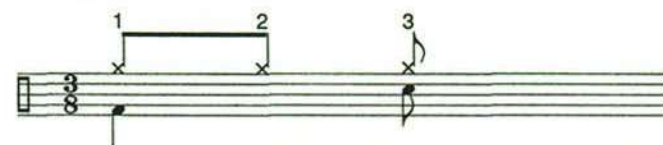
The following examples will give you a few more simple odd meters to experiment with. The basic idea of these exercises is to understand the concept of how a simple common time signature can be turned into an odd meter.

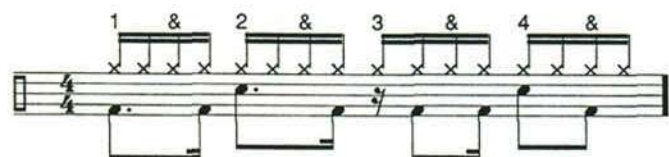


is equal to:

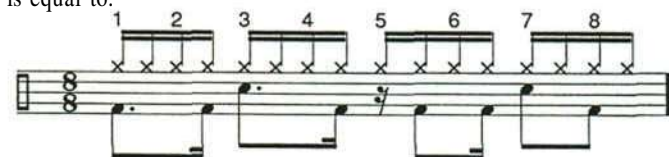


which becomes:

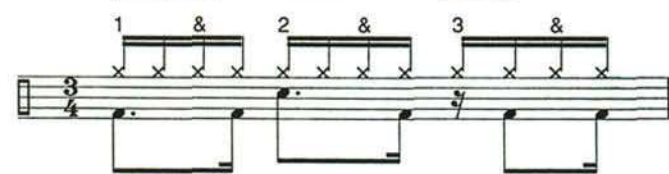
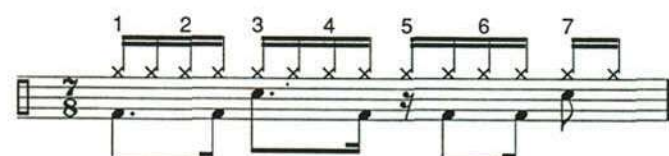




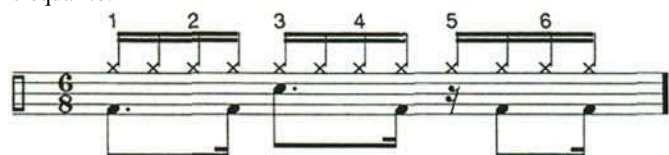
is equal to:



which becomes:



is equal to:



which becomes:



is equal to:



which becomes:



The focus of this article has been creating new time signatures from more "normal" ones by dropping off 8th notes from existing beats. Try this process with your own favorite beats; it really works. Next time we'll continue our pursuit and attack larger odd-time signatures.



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Raising The Curtain: Anatoli Kurashov



(I to r) Anatoli Kurashov and Gennadi Butov

Last summer, the Bolshoi Ballet Company visited the U.S. for the first time in eight years. On their 1979 tour, a core orchestra made up of New York musicians traveled with the company to its U.S. venues. In 1987, there was also a core orchestra, made up this time not of New Yorkers but of Soviet musicians. It comprised principal strings, several winds, a harpist, timpanist Anatoli Kurashov, and percussionist Gennadi Butov.

It was the first opportunity for those of us who played in the Los Angeles percussion section to work with colleagues from behind the Iron Curtain. By the end of the first week, I began thinking of something I had read by Jan Struther, the British writer whose newspaper columns, written during World War II, were the basis of the classic movie *Mrs. Miniver*, "...how much stronger the links are between people of the same calling than between people of the same race...A man who works with wood, a man who works with iron, a man who works with test-tubes, is more akin to a joiner, a smith, a research chemist from the other end of the earth than to a clerk or shopkeeper in his own town."

The L.A. percussionists (and those in New York, Washington D.C., and San Francisco, I would venture to guess) found, after a brief initial hesitancy, a wide common ground, and soon a warm and rapidly developing friendship with our Soviet colleagues. It began the first day, perhaps as

soon as we had all introduced ourselves and said hello, but certainly when Anatoli, after uncovering the timpani he was to play during the L.A. run, reached into his bag, dug out a Russian-English dictionary, and plopped it down on a percussion trunk. "There," he said. "Now we can talk."

One of the first questions I asked him concerned the old dilemma: What is the meaning of the pluses and circles that are written above cymbal parts in the music of Prokofiev and Shostakovich? It was particularly pertinent, since the first piece we were to rehearse was the Shostakovich ballet, *The Golden Age*. I had heard Frank Epstein, cymbal player with the Boston Symphony, say that he had discussed the question with a Soviet conductor and had been told that Russian musicians themselves are not certain of the meaning of those marks. Even so, I hoped for the definitive answer. And for a moment, I thought I had gotten it. "Circles are yarn mallets," Anatoli said. "Pluses are wooden stick." But then he explained that that was only their best guess. "We use the ear to decide," he said, "like you."

At 35 years old, Anatoli Kurashov has been a member of the Bolshoi Orchestra for ten years. He grew up in a small town near Sverdlovsk, in the Ural Mountains. As a youngster, he wanted to be a pilot, but then began to study percussion. "I liked it very much," he said. "I decided to

make it my profession, and I have devoted my whole life to it."

It was from Anatoli that we first learned about the Soviet system of training musicians—one that is likely to surprise most Americans. At the age of nine or ten, children are already set on a path that leads to a career in music. At that age, those who demonstrate certain basic abilities may attend a school specifically designed for the study of music. They are taught percussion, for example, in classes of five or six pupils. At the same time, they study music history, solfeggio, theory—subjects an American student is unlikely to encounter until college. It's all quite different from the training of average American kids, who get their first taste of percussion when they take drumset lessons after school at the local music store.

Later on the first day, as we rehearsed *The Golden Age*, it became clear why Gennadi Butov was included among the traveling Russian musicians. The famous "Polka," which shows up on so many orchestral audition lists, is only one (and not the most difficult) of the many xylophone solos in the ballet. We heard Gennadi warming up by playing the "Polka" and other difficult movements entirely with his left hand.

Communication with Gennadi was a bit of a problem at first. He had never studied English, and although he understood quite a bit, he was reluctant to speak it. However, on the second day of rehearsals, he and I discovered that we spoke the same variety of horribly fractured French, and henceforward Anatoli was occasionally permitted a break from his inter-percussion translating duties.

Gennadi spoke with particular warmth of his early training. His father was a percussionist with the Moiseyev Dance Company. At age nine, Gennadi entered the music school attached to the Moscow Conservatory, where he studied with a well-known percussionist, himself a member of the Bolshoi Orchestra. Voldemar Shteiman and his wife, Tatiana Egorova, both taught at the school.

Gennadi explained that Tatiana Egorova taught the youngest students for a year or so, until they were deemed ready to study with her husband. "She can be compared with water, he with fire," Gennadi observed. "He was very strict, and when he

Soviet Percussionists and Gennadi Butov

by Karen Ervin Pershing

was angry with us, we would go to Tatiana Egorova for comfort. She was almost like a mother."

Apparently Gennadi did not distinguish himself in his earliest years (although acceptance into the school was in itself an indication of ability). He laughed heartily at himself as he recounted, "I was the lowest member of the class, in all the instruments. But then, one year there was a young girl in the class. When I realized that she played better than me, my masculinity was wounded." He practiced 10 or 12 hours a day for at least half that term. "That is when I began to play well."

After their years of basic study, both Anatoli and Gennadi went on to complete higher educations in percussion: Gennadi at the Gnesins Institute (a pedagogic institute in Moscow), and Anatoli first at the Musical College attached to the Moscow Conservatory, and then at the Conservatory itself.

After a few breaktime conversations with Anatoli and Gennadi, the rest of us in the section were eager to show them around. We hoped to take them to places like The Professional Drum Shop and Musician's Transfer, where a variety of common and uncommon instruments are stored. But no one had told us what the Russians were and were not permitted to do. Almost anything, it turned out. Apart from the fact that they were expected to return to their hotel some time during the night—and, of course, to attend performances—the Soviet musicians were completely free to go anywhere and do anything. Anatoli and Gennadi, we soon learned, were eager to visit any place we thought might be of interest—to go to parties, to meet people, and most of all to communicate.

One of the highlights, they later said, was a visit to the Remo plant, with Remo Belli himself acting as official tour guide. At the end of the tour, the Soviet musicians went away laden with *PTS* tambourines, a gift from Remo, and we took them back to the plant several days later to pick up the drumsets and snare drums that Remo made available to them at exceedingly "good will" prices. Another highlight was a party at the home of composer/percussionist William Kraft. It turned out that Kraft's music is known and performed in the Soviet Union (a pleasant



The LA. Percussion Section (l to r): Tom Raney, Anatoli Kurashov, Karen Ervin Pershing, Don Williams, Teresa Dimond, Gennadi Butov

surprise to Bill), so it was a thrill for the Russians to see him presiding, not over a score, but a barbecue.

At lunch on one of the sightseeing days, we first began to learn from Anatoli and Gennadi how the Bolshoi Orchestra works. Although the Bolshoi Ballet is probably better known in the West, the Bolshoi itself encompasses both ballet and opera. The forerunner of the Bolshoi (the word means big, grand) was the Petrovsky Ballet, founded in 1776. The original Bolshoi theater took over the Petrovsky company in 1825, and the current Bolshoi Theater, where the company performs in Moscow, was built in 1856.

There are approximately 300 musicians in the Bolshoi orchestra. There are 16 percussionists, divided into fairly rigid classifications. Highest ranking, at least in terms of pay, are the three timpanists. There is also one person who plays either timpani or percussion, as needed. There are two mallet players, two percussion players, three cymbal specialists, and three bass drummers. Recently, the orchestra added two extra percussionists who play offstage parts.

The musicians are assigned as needed to whatever productions are going on. Gennadi already knew that in the fall he would be playing for a new production of a Shostakovich ballet—one with many extremely difficult xylophone solos. But

Anatoli had no idea what he might be assigned to do—perhaps tour, perhaps remain in Moscow.

Musicians are paid a fixed monthly salary, regardless of the number of rehearsals and/or performances. "Sometimes there are no rehearsals, sometimes many," Anatoli told us. "For Wagner's *Rheingold* we had 30 rehearsals. That is too many."

The Bolshoi uses mostly Ludwig and Premier instruments. There are Russian factories that manufacture percussion instruments, we were told, but the quality is not high enough for professional use.

At home in Moscow, Bolshoi musicians generally play four performances each week and, as seems to be true the world over, Monday is their day off. There is also a two-month paid vacation every summer—a vacation Anatoli and Gennadi forfeited in order to travel to the U.S.

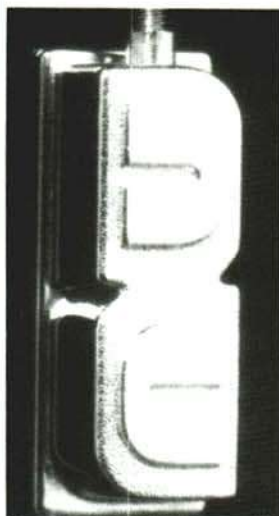
It was difficult to make any genuine economic comparisons. Anatoli's salary is 400 rubles a month (a ruble = \$1.40). This may sound low, but housing is subsidized and extremely cheap. Anatoli's apartment costs him about 15 rubles a month. And health care is fully provided; there is a clinic expressly for members of the Bolshoi.

As one might guess, playing for the august and venerable Bolshoi is one of the best jobs a musician can get in the Soviet Union. It was clear that both Anatoli and

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Gennadi are proud to be members of the orchestra.

Anatoli joined the Bolshoi ten years ago and gained a timpani position three years ago. In 1980, he competed in an all-Soviet Union competition for percussionists, held in Tallinn, in the republic of Estonia. Anatoli was the first-prize winner—a very great honor. Some of the required repertoire was unfamiliar to us, but also included were pieces by the French composers Dervaux and Passerone. And in the final round, Anatoli performed the second and third movements of the Creston *Concertino for Marimba*.

Gennadi Butov, at 41, is a veteran with 23 years of service with the Bolshoi. He was 18 when he auditioned and won a position. "Our auditions are different from yours," he told me. "You have strict rules; you have to play from a list. We don't have that. In the first round, we have to play all the instruments—any pieces we like. The second round is sight-reading. And finally, one plays with the orchestra."

It was unusual, Gennadi told me, for one so young to become a member of the orchestra. "At 18, I was *too* courageous. I didn't know how difficult it was. The usual way is for musicians to go to a middle-range orchestra for several years to gain their skills. I think that's the right approach." At first, he confided, there

were problems. "I had only studied; I had no experience. Fortunately, I was surrounded by many good people in the orchestra, and they helped me. They forgave me everything. I am doing the same thing now. When a 'little boy' comes into the orchestra, I try to help him. If he makes a mistake, I will go to the conductor and say, 'That was me, that wasn't him.' I do this because, when I joined the orchestra, the older musicians did the same for me." With that, Gennadi laughed uproariously. "I must tell you that the conductor does not always believe me."

When he first joined the orchestra, Gennadi played bass drum. At the same time, he was continuing his studies at the Gnesins Institute. Although it was difficult working with the Bolshoi and attending school, he persevered—partly, he informed me, because he knew he might eventually want to teach. "Also," he added with a smile, "I knew one day there would be a problem with my children. Now I can tell them, 'You have to study, because I studied.'" At that point, the smile became a laugh. "So I did it to be a good example."

After ten years, a mallet position opened up and it was given to Gennadi without an audition, "because they knew me," he said. And he does teach at the music school attached to the Gnesins Institute, where he himself studied. Anatoli, too, teaches at the college he attended, the one connected with the Moscow Conservatory.

Asked if he saw any general differences between Soviet and American percussion playing, Gennadi said that he believed that the level of percussion playing, particularly in the area of sight-reading, was slightly higher in the U.S. "Our musicians' general level is a little bit lower, but among our musicians, there are many stars."

He feels that percussion training in his native land might profit from a greater development of pedagogy, and more teaching texts and pieces. Gennadi himself has added to the teaching repertoire with a book of etudes for xylophone, which emphasizes the development of left-hand technique, and several student-level pieces for snare drum and piano, and for xylophone and piano.

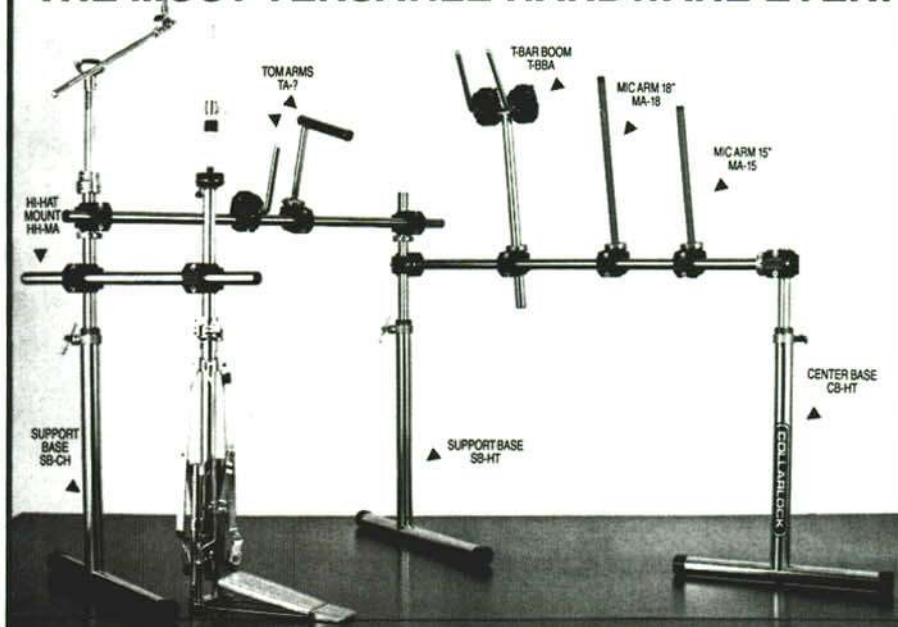
Towards the end of their visit, I asked both Anatoli and Gennadi if there were anything they would like to say to American percussionists. Their answers were remarkably similar; both alluded with great feeling to the communication between peoples that we had all experienced. In the words of Anatoli Kurashov: "My wish is for American and Russian musicians to get together more often and to play together. We speak Russian; you speak English: that might cause some difficulty. But when we play, we understand each other."



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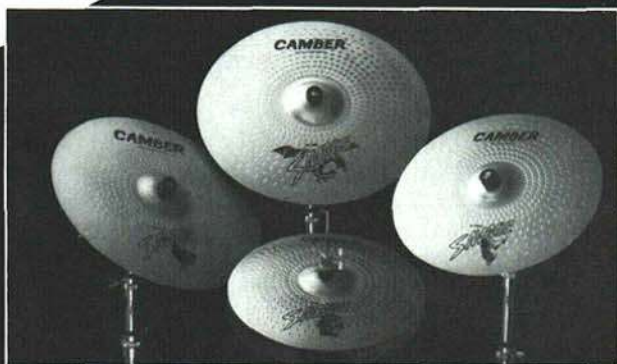
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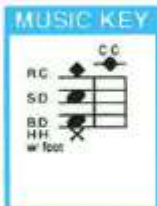
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by Peter Erskine

Phrases And Bar Lines



Photo by Rick Malkin



There is something about defining one's territory that is as comforting as it must be primitive. We see dogs do it all the time. Drummers do it, too—not by periodically visiting the corners of our property, of course, but by establishing the property lines of musical phrases. And, as with all manners and forms of establishing territorial rights, some ways are more sophisticated than others.

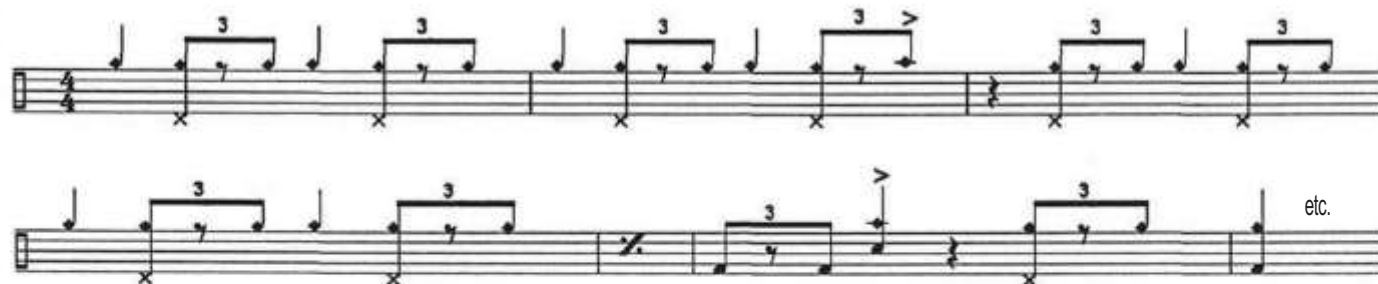
Consider the following examples, typical of the younger or less-experienced player:



What's going on in the drummer's mind here? Well, based on personal experience, I'd have to guess that the drummer is delineating these phrases every two or four bars because that represents *security*: Landing the bass drum on good old *terra firma* feels comfortable and safe. Why? Because the drummer doesn't have enough experience (or confidence) in basic timekeeping. These repetitive phrase markers are usually played over and over again without the drummer realizing it. (And if things feel a bit shaky in the music, a solid downbeat on the bass drum should cure that, right?)

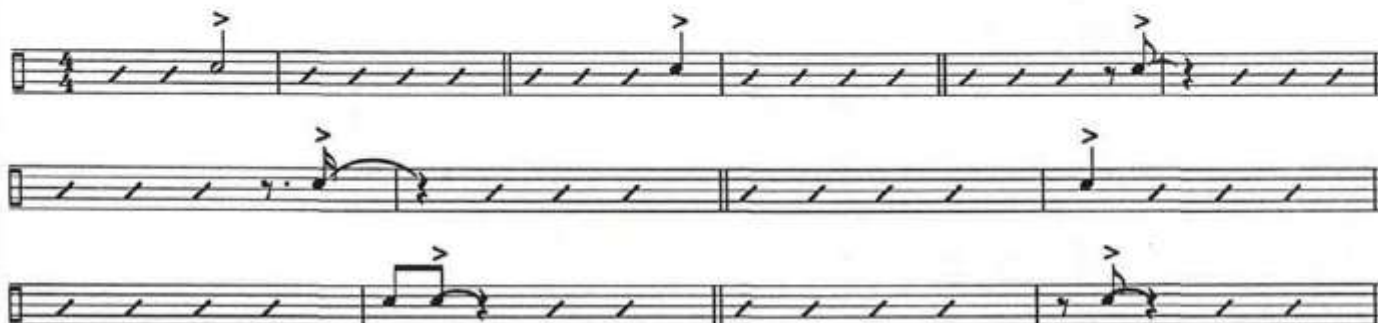
As I stated in an earlier article, music is linear. Interrupting the time with fills every few bars seriously lessens the flow of the music. I suggest that you record your playing as much as possible, and give it a listen. If you hear yourself constantly setting things up for the next phrase, then you may not only be overdoing it, you may also be compensating for bad timekeeping by constantly re-establishing the beat's territory.

Consider this example of a more open means of accenting and acknowledging the passage of a few bars' time:



I think that breathes a little better.

Here are some ways of delineating the end of one bar (or phrase) and the beginning of the next, in jazz and jazz/rock musics:



You can also let your fill go over the bar line and extend past the downbeat.



The downbeat of a *song* may be approached creatively as well. There are more ways to begin a jazz tune than by playing.



Consider these suggestions: On the first beat of a tune, play just

- A. the bass drum and cymbal (crash or ride)
- B. the bass drum
- C. the cymbal (ride or crash)
- D. the snare drum (with the cymbal)
- E. the snare drum, or tom-tom, without a cymbal
- F. the hi-hat (closed or open), with or without the bass drum

or try no drums at all! Unless the arrangement or composer (or band members, bandleader, etc.) asks otherwise, you can dare to play little or nothing at all. Whatever you play, do it with conviction and open ears.

Recently, I was recording with a piano trio, and for the beginning of the tune, I thought that some light-textured drumming was called for. So I played time on just the ride cymbal (no hi-hat on 2 and 4 to start with). The ride cymbal was an A. Zildjian Flat Top Ride, with lots of "air" in the sound. After we played the introduction a couple of times, I realized that enough rhythmic activity was already going on with the bass and piano. I felt that I could afford (indeed, the music was begging texturally for me) to play even less. I wound up playing just a single note on the Flat Top Ride every one or two bars for the first 16 bars. Then, slowly, I added more notes, more rhythms, on more and more of the kit, until I was playing the tune in a straight-ahead fashion. Nobody told me to do it that way; *it just felt most comfortable* and seemed to work best for the music. And that is why we play what we play!

Drummers do whatever they have to do to make themselves feel physically comfortable with the beat of the music. Make sure that what *you* do is appropriate and musical, or, as my father once told me, "Do what you want to do, but know *why* you're doing it."



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Bobby Previte, David Linton, and Samm Bennett at BAM's Next Wave Festival) or with his own band Invite The Spirit, featuring guitarist Henry Kaiser and Korean kayugem player Sang-Won Park, he prefers the organic simplicity of skins, wood, and metal.

His regular kit is comprised of a 20" Ludwig bass drum, which he has sawed in half for reasons of portability, a small tom-tom of unknown origin, a large Remo PTS non-tunable frame drum, a Ludwig chrome snare, and a wood temple block. He uses a 24" Chinese cymbal, an Italian flat ride cymbal, a pair of Tibetan meditation cymbals, and a hi-hat with the top a Zildjian K and the bottom a Chinese cymbal.

Noyes' style derives from the unorthodox fingering, sticking, and muffling techniques he has developed. "I've always tried to get more out of working with less," he notes, "like taking a single drum or a single cymbal, and really exploring how many different sounds I can get out of that one instrument. For example, I did a very strange gig at the Squat Theatre in New York a few years ago accompanying a troupe of German acrobats. And I did it entirely on one cymbal. I played it with my fingers, with sticks, I cupped it, spun it on the floor, crashed it against certain objects in the room to bring out resonances, and just struck it in a variety of manners. And at the end of the hour I felt that I could've found a few more things to do with that one cymbal. My audience, perhaps, had a different idea of what I could've done with it [laughs], but I really had fun exploring all of its possibilities."

Noyes studied tabla for six months and tries to bring some of those lessons to bear on his drumming when he plays with fingers and hands. Also, since hooking up with Sang-Won Park, he began studying Korean drumming techniques, and now incorporates some of those ideas into his own playing. "I try to copy some of Sang-Won's vibrato techniques by applying different pressures on the drumheads while hitting with a stick. And I notice his attack on the kayugem—from a gentle finger-flicking to a real aggressive plucking of the string. I kind of try to translate that approach into playing the drums."

Born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire in 1952, Noyes started out on guitar as a kid, but switched to drums while attending college around 1971. "At that time I started hearing bands like the Soft Machine and the Mothers Of Invention, and I thought, 'Gee, this is much more interesting than the stuff that gets played on the radio.' So I decided to be a little more adventurous in my own listening from that point. I began seeking out records by people like Sun Ra, Anthony Braxton, and Stockhausen, and I tried to adopt some of what they were doing to my own playing."

Noyes moved to New York City in 1980

and began hanging out with the fringe rock players who were experimenting with improvisation at the time, like Anton Fier, Bill Laswell, Michael Beinhorn, and others. He soon became associated with another percussionist named Mark Miller. "We started performing as a duo," explains Noyes. "Then we decided to expand from that and formed a band called Toy Killers, which had many illustrious Downtown musicians pass through its ranks—Arlo Lindsay, Nicky Skopelitis, Michael Beinhorn, to name a few."

"Eventually it got to the point where neither Mark nor I were playing drums anymore. We used Bobby Previte on drums, and we both veered toward more of a performance art thing. Mark was into his pyrotechnic thing then, where he would have these cocktail shakers filled with rubbing alcohol and set things on fire. But after a serious accident he had one evening at The Kitchen, where he burned his drumkit and accidentally spilled the rubbing alcohol on both his arms, causing some pretty serious burns, we decided to give that up. Mark and I had played together for quite a while, but it got to the point where we kind of exhausted our possibilities, so we each went on to other things. Mark began working with Arlo Lindsay & His Ambitious Lovers, and I got involved with Invite The Spirit."

Noyes calls that trio with Henry Kaiser and Sang-Won Park "a hybridization of Western experimental free music and Korean classical music." They have one eponymously titled record out, released in 1983 on Celluloid Records.

Noyes says he is on a self-imposed sabbatical from doing solo gigs, and is instead spending more of his time on soundtrack work. "I am a percussionist by trade, but I am also interested in doing things that would be impossible for me to do as a percussionist, like realizing large-scale percussion pieces where, say, 40 or 50 percussion parts are happening simultaneously. And, of course, with sequencers and computers, it's possible."

A recently recorded piece utilizes a Synclavier sample of his bowed saw (a Noyes signature), and multiplies that sound into a full 50-piece saw orchestra. "There might not be that many musical saw players in the world, but with the Synclavier I can realize this concept. I'm interested in this notion of taking certain sounds of instruments, the basic timbres, and combining them in the sense where the whole basic sound of it becomes totally transformed. For example, the musical saw piece: When you have that many of them it melds into a sort of saw wash so that, by and large, it doesn't quite sound like a saw or a group of saws anymore, but takes on a whole other quality."

By acquiring Roland *Octapads* in the near future, Noyes will be able to activate

samples of his sawing or his own unorthodox drumming techniques. A musician of highly eclectic tastes, Noyes' record collection includes Hank Williams, Baby Dodds, Milford Graves, and lots of Elvis Presley. He brings all their influences to bear in his personal approach to drumming.

Noyes' former partner in Toy Killers, **Mark Miller**, grew up in Sunnyvale, California, and began taking lessons at age eight. "I had a great teacher named Rick Hanson," says Miller, "who has written these incredible books, one of which is called *Four Way Coordination*, which I would recommend to any drummer interested in any modern style of independent-type drumming. I studied that book for years, and can still only do about 30% of it. It's a totally hairy book."

Miller studied with his mentor at age 16, and a few years later he formed a trio called Sensitive Chaos. He began incorporating Hanson's lessons into a progressive jazz context, and in 1975 he moved to Java, Indonesia, where he studied gamelan with a master named Udang Sumarma. "He was a very influential figure in my life," says Miller. "I studied and hung out in the villages with him. After six months of that I moved to New York, and around 1978 started hanging out with John Zorn, Fred Frith, Bill Laswell, and those musicians on the Downtown scene."

Miller not only was a key player on the Downtown scene himself, but he also operated one of the more vital venues for that type of renegade music. "It was a great little club in the West Village called Morton Street," he fondly recalls. "It was a big place with a homey atmosphere and a good sound system. We ran it for four years until we started getting a lot of pressure and complaints from the neighbors to close it down. I'm now thinking of moving to Los Angeles next summer, and the first thing I'd like to do is find a nice little club like Morton Street, and get people from the New York Downtown scene to come out there."

Meanwhile, back in New York, Miller is currently involved in running a small recording studio where he produces on-the-edge rock and pop projects. "I actually still have the name Toy Killers, but it's a kind of disco-metal thing now, with heavy emphasis on singing and songwriting rather than just sheer instrumental blowing. It's dance music, but more intense than what you'd hear on the radio."

After a period of self-imposed sabbatical from playing live, which lasted for nearly two years, Miller is just now beginning to get back in the saddle again. He's excited about the new set of RIMS he just acquired, and is ready to get out and jam again with some of his old Downtown pals. "I just did a show at The Kitchen with a Japanese shamisen player—just me

and him. It was wonderful. So I'm ready to do more. I'll do anything now, even if it's backing up a pack of barking dogs."

Peter Zeldman is a serious young man from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, who came to New York City in 1985 after a lifetime's worth of playing experiences. He has performed in old-folks homes, mental hospitals, on cruise ships, in resort lounges, in rock bands, jazz bands, and fusion bands. He has also played with Sonny Stitt, and appeared on guitarist Steve Vai's self-produced solo album, *Flexible* (recently rereleased by Relativity Records). After all that, he was ready for New York.

"Everything that I've done has been like fuel for me," Zeldman says. "I've taken each gig and let it influence something positive in my playing. And now I'm exploring some new areas on my own in a solo context, and I really had to come here to do that. In the Midwest there really isn't an audience that's receptive to new forms of music, but in New York there is. I love New York for that reason."

Zeldman recently premiered his "Perpendicular Drumming And The Interference Phenomenon" at Roulette, an important venue for experimental music in New York City, located (where else) way Downtown. Zeldman has written lengthy treatises on his concept of perpendicular drumming, and if you get him started he could talk for days on the subject. In a nutshell, Zeldman explains, "It's a solo form of drumming that I created through complexity. But I made it accessible to the public through ethnic means—through the use of hypnotic African and Asian rhythms that grab the ear and give the listener something to hold on to."

From this churning, hypnotic base, Zeldman proceeds to build by blending in complex time signatures, cross rhythms, artificial groupings, and what he calls rhythm blocks. "My most recent leap is being able to play this music of such ultra-complexity, and make it accessible," he says. "I find a focal point, a kind of mantra for the listener. I'll start with a very slow rhythm, maybe double hi-hats in 7/4 time, and repeat it. Repetition is how you stimulate something called the Relaxation Response, which is what's stimulated during meditation. So you have a guide; you have some point of reference. I picture it almost like clouds—a kind of beautiful slowness hovering overhead. And below it is the city, which is the rumble and complexity. And you're allowing yourself to let your ears get tickled by this kind of bubbling complexity, while still holding onto the hypnotic pulse. And then I might sing and play mouth percussion over it, just to add an extra little nudge. And despite all that's going on, it ends up becoming something that is almost simplistic in nature."

The concept sounds similar, in theory, to Glenn Branca's multiple guitar textures, or even George Russell's more advanced concepts of vertical composition based on the polyrhythmic interlocking of African drum ensembles. Whatever, the results are dramatically powerful and energizing for the listener.

Zeldman comes by his penchant for polyrhythms quite naturally. He gravitated toward that approach to drumming while experimenting as a kid back in Pittsburgh. "I would allow myself to be completely spastic on the kit, and then I would try to repeat whatever I had just done. I'd just go down into the basement

and play my guts out, trying to get colors and textures on the drums, and this evolved into a kind of personalized style for me."

He later realized that some form of discipline was needed. "I had been listening to stuff like Black Sabbath, when my brother bought me this Dizzy Gillespie record, which all of a sudden really turned my head. And from there I got into Elvin Jones, which was a big breakthrough. Listening to Elvin gave me the go-ahead to be spastic on the drums. After Elvin my attitude was, 'Listen, don't worry about much. Just play anything you feel like playing. It's okay, and don't ever let any-

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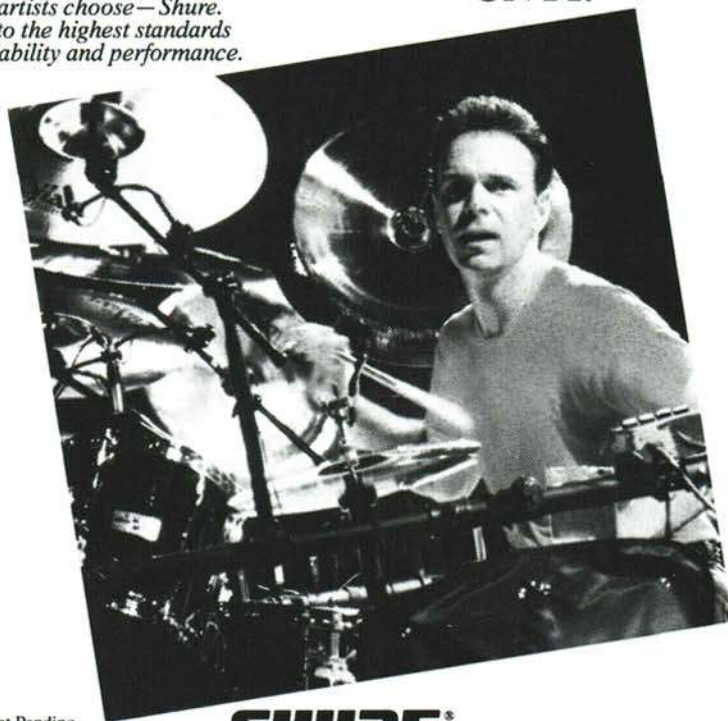
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body tell you it's not cool to play that way.'

"But I had all these ideas, and they were almost out of control at a certain point, so I really got into discipline. I had to go back and learn how to play simplistically, without being the slightest bit tempted to play something that would get in the way. That's when I learned how to play strictly on 2 and 4, and began understanding the importance of that kind of trance drumming. I had to go back and learn how to put a repetition factor into my music."

Zeldman plays a Tama kit with a 22" bass drum, a Drum Workshop double pedal, an 18" floor tom, 13" and 14" power toms, which he loosens to get a strong flap articulation, and a double hi-hat. He also employs bongos, multiple bells, two 15" Zildjian dark crashes, one 20" Zildjian ride cymbal, and a set of aluminum cookie sheets, which he hangs around his kit. "I use them to get a really sharp, abbreviated sound. They're so short and so audible, that they cut right through all the other stuff happening. It's like a mini explosion from out of nowhere."

Apart from his solo performances, Zeldman also plays in an adventurous trio called The Card Game, which utilizes drums, bass, and voice. His playing in that context is simpler yet still full of colors. "It's a pop band," he says, "but we're doing some really unusual things that you never hear in pop music. The singer, Cindy Baron, is into microtonal singing and using her voice as an instrument. And the bassist, Kyle Turner, covers a wide range on his instrument. There's a certain tension to the music that appeals to the edge. It has a certain dark, almost gloomy, atmospheric quality that appeals to the avant garde audience, and yet we have the rock and pop audience as well. It's an invigorating band. After a gig we're refueled to go out and face New York again."

Maybe they wouldn't dig it in Pittsburgh, but in New York there is definitely an audience that is grooving to Zeldman's unorthodox concepts on drumming.

Katie O'Looney was born in Kilarney, Ireland, grew up in Utica, New York, and became a part of the Downtown scene when she came to town in 1980. Her first instrument was piano, but she switched to drums at age 12. In college she began to jam with friends, but didn't join her first band until she hit New York, hooking up with the all-woman reggae band Steppin' Razor. She began sitting in at blues clubs on jam nights, and eventually became the house drummer at the Buskers Club in the Bowery. Around that time she joined the edgy rock band Details At 11, and things opened up from there.

"I met people like Elliott Sharp and other people on the improvising scene through Details," says O'Looney, "and I

started working with them a lot. And these people have given me encouragement and opportunities, while also helping to shape my sound by what they played. I play differently in each band, depending on who's around me, and this kind of diversity gives me the freedom to explore different techniques without getting locked into one sound. That has opened me up more and more."

O'Looney continues to play around New York with Details At 11 (their debut album on the West German Dossier label was released last year). She also belongs to an all-woman pop band called Bite Like A Kitty, which performs at Downtown venues like the Pyramid and CBGB's. The group recently released their debut album on their own Catapult Records. "Bite Like A Kitty is a more song-oriented and accessible kind of music, so my role there is just to provide a solid low end while offering an interesting melodic sense. Details ventures out a little further, and then from there the improv stuff I do with other drummers like Takashi Kazamaki or David Linton goes out even further."

O'Looney plays a Rogers kit with a 22" bass drum, rack toms, a Ludwig snare, Latin Percussion timbales, a 14" floor tom, and plays Zildjian cymbals. After playing around town for eight years, she definitely feels a part of the community of Downtown drummers. "I know most of them," she says. "They're my friends; we play together. They're all individualists. We all grew up with an eclectic mix of things, from rock to jazz to a heavy emphasis on ethnic musics, and that's all influenced us as drummers."

She adds, "This community of players is really inspiring. The connections keep overlapping, and we keep pushing each other. And I'd say there is a common link. There's a New York kind of sound that doesn't exist anywhere else. It's not defined by any one sound, but more by an overall attitude. It's a forceful style, intricate and more complex than straight rock, utilizing different timing combinations and cutting-edge sounds. I guess it just reflects the struggle to survive as a musician in New York City."

Jim Mussen has been surviving in New York City as a drummer since 1982. He came to town from Berkeley, California, where he had played in an Allman Brothers clone band and a more ambitious Art Ensemble Of Chicago type aggregation. He also studied for a while in San Francisco with George Marsh, who hipped him to polyrhythms. Then, after arriving in New York, he checked into the Drummers Collective, where he studied with the likes of Billy Hart, Kenwood Dennard, and Horacee Arnold over a period of two years.

Mussen put together a band called Doctor Nerve, which evolved out of a series of jam sessions with fellow Downtown musi-

cians like saxophonist Michael Lytle and guitarist Nick Didkovsky. Through those associations he met Elliott Sharp, and eventually played in his Carbon ensemble both on record and in performances around New York. During this time he also played in a fusion outfit called Shadow Lines, led by vibraphonist Marc Wagon. His band Doctor Nerve recently released its second album on Cuneiform Records, *Armed Observations*. He describes the music as "King Crimson, Frank Zappa, and The Sex Pistols rolled into one big ball."

Though Mussen has been closely associated with the Downtown scene for the past six years or so, he says he's slowly seeking to expand his horizons and get involved in more lucrative settings. "The great thing about the Downtown scene," says Mussen, "is that the musicians are very sensitive improvisors. But it's almost impossible to survive just by playing in these Downtown circles. So I started to branch out into pop about a year and a half ago, programming drum machines and computers for a recording studio in town that specializes in dance remixes."

Meanwhile, he's getting more involved in electronics with Doctor Nerve. "I'm now using a mixed kit of electronics and acoustic drums. It's a Premier set with trigger mic's on all the drums, sending signals to an Emulator SP-12 or a Casio FZ-1 sampler. I also have a set of Roland Octapads that triggers the SP-12 or an Akai S-900 sampler."

And now that he's covered on the technological end, Mussen is working on getting his groove together. "What I'm trying to do now on the drums is what people like Pharoan ak Laff, Bobby Previte, and Ronald Shannon Jackson are great at. These people can play very solid time but also do incredibly strange things with phrases. They can play a rhythmic grouping or just a free thing, and still keep the time involved. I want to be able to play with that kind of solid basis, but still be able to do interesting polyrhythms and phrases around the time. It's called being creative without getting in the way. That's what I'm learning more and more. There's a lot of room to make an impact and play simply, but still play very creatively and say something of value. It's a question of taste and the ability to discern when is the right time to just go for it. When you're younger, you tend to go in for reckless abandon at the expense of maintaining a really solid groove. But seasoned players like Bobby or Shannon have reached that level where they have the power, the taste, and the chops, plus the knowledge. I'm reaching for that."

Pippin Barnett is making a name for himself on the Downtown scene, although he continues to make his home in Richmond, Virginia. Born in 1953, he grew up

in New Jersey, then moved with his family to Japan in 1965, where he remained for four years. He attended high school in Tokyo during the Beatles/Led Zeppelin/Deep Purple years, and became popular among the high school rock musicians because he could easily translate the lyrics of all the pop tunes of the day for them.

He saved up and bought a set of drums while still in Tokyo, and continued practicing on them when he returned to the States at age 15. After moving to Detroit, he sold his drums and decided to trade in music for his new interest, cabinet-making. He moved down to Richmond, fully intending to pursue a career as a woodworker, but he met a piano player who soon convinced him to take up the drums again. They formed a band, playing Pharoah Sanders covers and doing a lot of improvised music. Over the next two years he began meeting other like-minded musicians in the area, and in 1976 they formed the Richmond Artists Workshop (RAW), which functioned as an outlet for painters, sculptors, dancers, actors, and musicians with outrageous ideas. It was a haven for all the Richmond renegades. Barnett met a few musicians at RAW and put together an improvising quartet called Idiot Savant, which lasted until 1980. That's when he formed The Orthotonics. A few years later, Fred Frith produced their debut album.

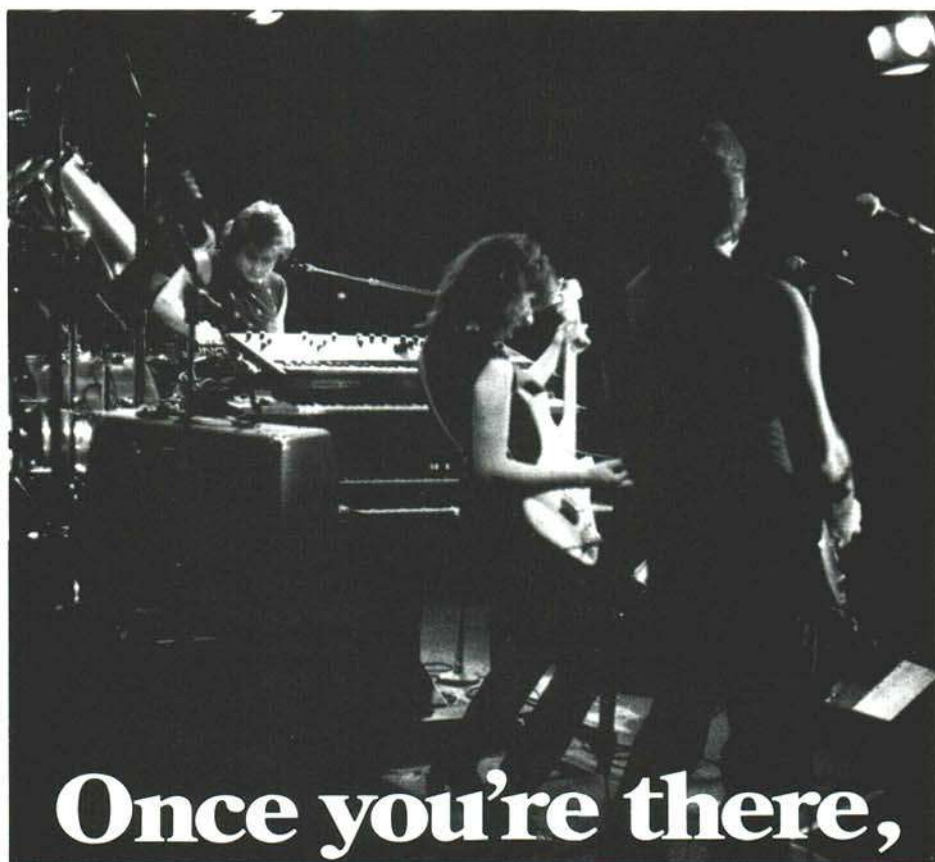
Barnett had met Frith and other Downtown New York musicians like Samm Bennett, George Cartwright, and Eugene Chadbourne through RAW. "It was pretty much part of a Southern network that these great improvising musicians from New York and from Europe would hit—Birmingham, Chatanooga, Richmond. That's how I met George Cartwright, and that led to my joining his band, Curlew, in 1983."

Barnett still plays in Curlew, and The Orthotonics are still going strong. He's also a member of a group called Ninal, comprised of New York cellist Tom Cora and a bunch of improvising musicians from Switzerland and Yugoslavia. He somehow manages to find time to also play in a band with New York musicians Zeena Parkins and Chris Cochrane, with the edgy rock band Half Japanese, and with the eccentric Richmond-based performance troupe known as The Ululating Mummies. Barnett says his style of playing remains pretty consistent from band to band: "My playing has been described as circular, more polyrhythmic than a straight 4/4 rock backbeat, although I do enjoy playing a groove, and I get to do some of that with Half Japanese and with The Orthotonics."

Basically self-taught, except for one two-hour lesson with Andrew Cyrille, Barnett has forged a style of drumming that is in great demand on the international Downtown scene. He may never go back to cabinet-making again.

Four other drummers have traveled from far away to become a part of the Downtown scene. **Yuvall Gabay** was playing in rock bands and doing studio session work in his native Jerusalem, Israel before arriving in New York in 1984. As a member of Bosh, he incorporates the polyrhythmic approach of Moroccan music into the band's sound. Gabay explains, "Both my parents are from Morocco, so I grew up listening to a lot of that music. I also listened to a lot of American rock 'n' roll and funk music as a kid growing up in Jerusalem, and those elements also find their way into my playing. They all blend together."

His partner in Bosh, percussionist **Kumiko Kimoto**, plays metals, gongs, and RotoToms. More recently, she's gotten involved in programming her own sounds on the Casio *CZ-101*, which she triggers from a set of Roland *Octapads*. As a teenager in Osaka, Japan, she was involved in several rock bands, strictly as a singer. It wasn't until she came to New York in 1981 and met up with Bosh leader Samm Bennett that she switched over to drums. "Why drums? Because it came out that way," says Kimoto. "I was always attracted to rhythm, and it seemed more natural to me than guitar or some other instrument." Kumiko is also a dancer/



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choreographer, and recently premiered a piece at the experimental space P.S. 122 with music composed by Yuvall Gabay and featuring fellow drummer Jim Mussen and guitarist Davey Williams.

Takashi Kazamaki began playing drums at age 16 in his native Tokyo, where he gigged with high school rock bands that specialized in copying bands like Mountain and Deep Purple. At age 20, he read in a Japanese jazz magazine about a performance by the avant garde drummer Milford Graves. Though Takashi did not see this performance, the mere description of Graves' reckless abandon and pure expression was enough to turn his head around. He began experimenting in his own way, performing on one or two drums instead of a whole kit. Gradually he evolved a signature style. He plays standing with a snare drum slung across his shoulder, a kick

drum, and one small cymbal. His snare drum is filled with seeds, and he will allow it to crash into the cymbal to create sounds. He utilizes a number of fingering and muting techniques similar to Charlie Noyes' to get whole realms of sound out of each instrument.

Kazamaki came to New York in 1984 and began collaborating on the Downtown scene with the likes of Tom Cora, Peter Kowald, Samm Bennett, John Zorn, Elliott Sharp, and Ned Rothenberg, all of whom he had previously met in Tokyo. Though Kazamaki continues to live in Tokyo, where he produces monthly concerts of improvisatory music featuring players from Japan, Europe, and the States, he visits New York City often enough to be considered a part of the Downtown scene. On his most recent trip to town, he performed a mesmerizing drum duo gig with Samm Bennett at the Experimental Intermedia Center. Bennett will, no doubt, return the favor by performing again with Takashi at one of his monthly concerts in Tokyo.

Ikoue Mori has been on the Downtown scene much longer than her compatriots from Japan. She came to town in 1977 and became the rhythmic backbone of one of the edgiest, most notorious bands to emerge from the No Wave scene of the late '70s, the combusive DNA. That band broke up in 1980, at which point she began collaborating on the Downtown scene with people like Fred Frith and John Zorn. In 1982 she formed Sunset Court, an improvising ensemble. Then in 1985 she returned to Tokyo and formed a group called Sukuko, which cut a record that was released there. She has continued collaborating on record and in performance with key figures on the Downtown scene, including Zorn and trombonist Jim Staley, who operates the important Roulette space.

Since 1987, Ikoue has been experimenting with drum machines. For her current Toban Djan band, she incorporates a Yamaha RX11 and a Roland TR-707 into her regular acoustic Ludwig kit. She uses no cymbals except a hi-hat. She also has a group called Zozo Band and an improvising-song-form band with saxophonist Michael Lytle and singer Cinnie Cole. She is a vital force on the Downtown scene, and Fred Frith has said of her eccentric rhythmic sensibility, "Many people think Ikoue can't play at all. But she actually has perfect time. And she's the only one I've ever heard who can make a drum machine sound interesting. Of all the players on this scene, she's my favorite."

Well, that's actually 13 drummers, but who's counting? Call it the Downtown Baker's Dozen. Individually, they are courageous, probing pioneers. Collectively, they create a vital scene. The force emanates from New York City but the

influence of this Downtown scene can be felt all over the world today, thanks to Downtown ambassadors like David Moss, Samm Bennett, David Linton, and the others profiled here. They are all carrying the Downtown message to audiences far and wide. From Birmingham to Albuquerque, from Frankfurt to Zurich, from Osaka to Amsterdam, and all points between, they're hearing the sizzle and crunch of the Downtown scene.

Recommended Listening

David Moss:

Full House, Moers Music 2010
Dense Band, Moers Music 2040
Terrain, Cornpride 007
Cargo Cult Revival, Rift 5

David Linton:

ISM (with Elliott Sharp), Zoar 7
Carbon (with Elliott Sharp), Zoar 15
New Music From Antarctica (sampler), Antarctica 6201

Samm Bennett:

Metalfunctional, Bennett/Igloo 020
Chop Socky (with Bosh), Dossier 7545
Semantics (with Elliott Sharp, Ned Rothenberg), Rift 9

Charles K. Noyes:

The World And The Raw People, Zoar 12
Free Mammals, Visible 6791
Fractal (with Elliott Sharp), Dossier 7515
Invite The Spirit (with Henry Kaiser, Sang-Won Park), Celluloid/OAO 5008

Mark Miller:

Locus Solus (with John Zorn), Rift 7
ISM (with Elliott Sharp), Zoar 7
Carbon (with Elliott Sharp), Zoar 15
Envy (with Arlo Lindsay & The Ambitious Lovers), Editions EG EDED 39

Katie O'Looney:

Details At 11, Dossier ST 7522
Bite Like A Kitty, Catapult Records
Fractal (with Elliott Sharp), Dossier 7515

Jim Mussen:

Out To Bomb Fresh Kinds (with Doctor Nerve), Punos Music 1123
Armed Observation (with Doctor Nerve), Cuneiform Rune 8
Fractal (with Elliott Sharp), Dossier 7515

Pippin Barnett:

North America (with Curlew), Moers Music 02042

Ikoue Mori:

Locus Solus (with John Zorn), Rift 7
A Taste Of DNA (with DNA), American Clave 1003
Ex-Members Of Mars, Hydrax 101

(All albums available through New Music Distribution Service, 500 Broadway, New York, NY 10012).

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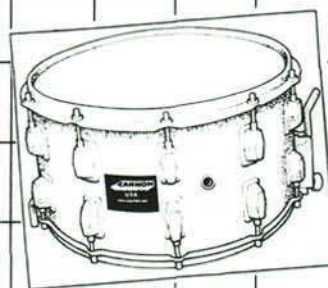
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To Dupin and his bandmates, "home" is a large white building at Fort Meade, Maryland. (Steve Gadd was once stationed there as an Army Field Band percussionist.) It is there that rehearsals, recordings, and some on-post performances take place.

For whom do Dupin and his fellow Jazz Ambassadors play? One imagines servicemen, four-star generals, and perhaps even Washington politicians—and the band does play for all of the above, on occasion. But most of the people they play for don't wear the greens. "Our job at the Field Band is primarily public relations," says the 37-year-old Dupin. "We deal mostly with playing before the civilian public. We work for the Army, and we support Army functions, too. But when we're out on tour, our job is to go out and entertain the people in the civilian community."

And fine entertainment it is. Those civilians lucky enough to hear the Jazz Ambassadors play soon discover that the music isn't just a lot of boring, "hup-two" marching stuff. "There are other musical possibilities in the Army," states Dupin. "The Field Band has a country-rock group called The Volunteers, and even the Post

bands have stage or rock bands that they put out for concerts."

Of course, other Army bands are located at various bases around the country. But the Jazz Ambassadors stand out from all of them in that they are a "premiere" band within the Army. The level of musicianship is higher, on the average, as compared with other Army bands. Dupin explains, "If we have an opening in the band, and we take a civilian—as opposed to somebody who's already in the Army—after he finishes his basic training, he doesn't go to the Army school of music for further training. He's either good enough to be in the band or he's not."

In 1971, the Jazz Ambassadors, then known as the Studio Band, decided Dupin was "good enough." Dupin, then a college senior, auditioned for the band while they were touring through his home state of Kentucky. At that time, the draft was on, but Dupin gladly enlisted; he'd heard the Studio Band and loved their sound. And he says he hasn't had any regrets in the 16 years he's been in.

Dupin's job in the band is unique in that he plays drumset fulltime, in contrast to other Army percussionists who "rotate" on the various percussion instruments. However, he did learn other percussion instruments as a student—but it wasn't always easy going.

Dupin began studying the drums at the age of 10 with Ed Vollmer, a Cincinnati teacher who, Dupin feels, "did a good job of putting up with me and making me learn something." Dupin's father financed the lessons, apparently realizing his son wanted more to do with drums. Recalls Dupin, "Whenever I'd watch a drummer on

TV, I'd be lying on the floor, beating on my stomach and my legs with my hands. I don't know if Dad was annoyed at that or what, but at one point he said, 'You wanna take drum lessons?' I said, 'Okay!'"

While Dupin was in high school, teacher Bobby Grason helped him develop most of his current technique. "It was sort of a George Lawrence Stone-type system—getting into analyzing the movements of your arms," Dupin says of Grason's teaching style. He credits another Cincinnati drummer, Terry Moore, with exposing him to new things.

"He decided to hip me up to what was happening," Dupin remembers. "He was the one who started laying albums on me that featured drummers like Ed Blackwell, Billy Higgins, and Tony Williams—who I really hadn't heard much of. It was sort of like opening the door."

The door opened wider for Dupin when he began studying with Robert Schietroma, a percussion instructor at Moorehead State University in eastern Kentucky. "I was a percussion major and I was behind on mallet instruments, so he spent a lot of time trying to bring up that side of my playing. He was very inspirational: He would come into stage band rehearsal and say, 'Hey, why don't you try doing this?' I didn't really study drumset a lot from him, but he was somebody that I didn't want to disappoint. He kept me trying."

Dupin's collegiate efforts paid off; he was able to fit in with the Studio Band and "kick" with them as they sight-read music. His skill at sight-reading was what helped him get in more than anything else. "You have to be able to read, or you're going to be in over your head," observes Dupin.

The Jazz Ambassadors cover a wide range of tunes at rehearsals—and that suits Dupin just fine. "What I like about this job—and what makes it a challenge—is that we go through a lot of different styles of music. I'm playing rock stuff in the morning, while in the evening show one tune is going to be by Basie and the next may be by Don Menza. I have to mentally change gears very quickly."

The "rock stuff in the morning" Dupin refers to is the music played for the numerous high school shows that the Jazz Ambassadors do. The band is well received

Dupin: ummer Wears Stripes

at these high schools, because it keeps up with the times, using many contemporary tunes featuring vocalists. "We have gone into the schools in years past and played jazz," Dupin says. "But keeping in mind that the mission of the band is public relations, we found that most of the kids who were not in band liked the rock material." The Jazz Ambassadors do workshop/clinics at the schools as well, helping music students develop skills they will use as they listen to each other in band situations.

How does Dupin deal with listening to and playing with the Jazz Ambassadors? What's it like to be the driving force behind the big-band ensemble? "It's a balance between creativity and meeting the needs of a big band," he explains. "When you're playing with a small group, quartet, or trio, you can mentally lock in. When you're working with a big band—especially when you change halls every night—you run into new acoustics. I need to play so that the guys on the far side of the band at least have a pretty good idea of where the pulse is. Now, that doesn't mean I have to hit backbeats all the time, but there are a lot of times, like if I've got an eight-bar break in a tune, I'll try to come out of it in the last bar or so with something identifiable. I certainly don't want it to be corny or a cliché, but it will be something that's fairly obvious so that everybody nails where they're supposed to come in. Obviously, the more people you have in an ensemble, the more differences of opinion you have as to where the exact tempo is. So sometimes you have to dig your heels in and define it. Ideally, you're working with the bass player." On the road, Dupin carries around a pair of sticks, a drumpad, and a metronome for practice purposes. Staying fresh creatively while on a long tour isn't easy. The band travels by bus, and travel time varies, depending on what part of the country they're in. In a state such as Montana, for example, the towns are farther apart than they are in New England. But whether playing in a large city or in a small town, the band appreciates those members of the audience who come up to the stage and talk to them after a concert.

"I get a lot of kids around the drums

sometimes," comments Dupin. "There's the fascination of the volume as much as anything else." Dupin gives his young visitors a pair of sticks and lets them play on his set of maple-finish Rogers. His is a relaxed attitude toward allowing others to touch his drums; he'll often say, "You're not going to break them. They're built to beat on."

Dupin isn't worried that drums will eventually be phased out, despite the advent of drum electronics. "There are certain aspects of drumming that are probably going to be taken over by drum programs," he notes, "simply because whoever is writing the jingle or the record can go home and program it, bring it in, and put it down on tape one time through. They don't have to pay anybody; they just have to own or have access to the equipment. On the other hand, it's difficult to imagine somebody writing a good drum program for music that requires a lot of interplay, like jazz. I'm not talking about the kind of jazz that is straight-8th-type stuff, like jazz fusion or jazz rock. I mean the kind of stuff that swings. You just can't replace a drummer for that. At least I haven't been able to imagine how you could."

"In terms of technical development, I don't find myself hampered by equipment. I've gone through phases where I thought I could walk into a drum store and buy something that would make me play better. I've got some really swell stuff now because of that. But the *playing* comes from within."

Despite an Army budget cut last year, Dupin is nonetheless working on implementing electronics into his drumkit. One gets the feeling, though, that his acoustic drums will always be his main interest. Dupin feels that electronic drums are "going to back off from where they are now, to a point where they become just another tool to be used."

What advice would he give to drummers just starting out, who have high hopes of one day "making it big"? "I would advise them to get some instruction. I studied with a lot of people and I feel like it was a big help. I stayed with each teacher for at least three years. I think a teacher needs time. Essentially, drumming is just pick-

ing up something and hitting something else with it. But a good teacher can keep you from reinventing the wheel. I mean, you could spend a year trying to figure out how to do something, when a teacher could show it to you in two weeks. Teachers can get you headed in the right direction, so that you're not developing grips or arm motions that are eventually going to hold you back. There are a lot of good drummers out there who are self-taught, but I think there are a lot *more* drummers who have had the benefit of time spent with a good teacher.

"I'm getting looser in my old age," he jokes. "I mean, if you want to play just like the drummer for Bananarama, then go ahead and play like the drummer for Bananarama. You don't have to get into this big 'heritage of drumming' trip. That's laying too much on somebody to start with. When I got into the drums, I got in where I was *hearing* it. I got into the music I liked, and I expanded from there."



"The Outer Gate"

The following piece, "The Outer Gate," is from my new MCA album, *Living Colors*. This piece is basically comprised of two sections; the first part (A) is an introductory chordal melody, which is followed by (B) the statement of the theme. The two sections also have contrasting harmonic qualities. The first section consists of blocked chords with constant structures—major triads with an added 9th in first inversion (3rd in the bass)—while the second section is more traditional sounding.

The idea is to separate these two sections with contrasting approaches. The first section should be played strongly, while the second section should start softly and build to both endings. The third section (C) is a marimba solo on the album, but for our purposes here I've included some comping for vibes. If you like, you can record the solo changes and practice playing over them.

I've notated this part for ease of reading. You must observe the pedaling to get the desired effect.

♩ = 205

A **ff**

A(9)/C# D(9)/F# E(9)/G# B(9)/C# D(9)/F#

A(9)/C# D(9)/F# E(9)/G# B(9)/D# D(9)/F# G# F#sus C#-11

L(9) E(9) D(9)/F# A(9)/C# B(9)/D#

D(9)/F# A(9)/C# B7sus F#sus G#-11

Bb-11 C-11

1 2

C-(Maj 7) C-11 C-11/Bb Ab Maj7 G-11

B **mf**

F#sus Eb(9) 1 Ab(9) Bb(9) C(2) *ff*
 2 Ab(9) Bb(9) C(2) G/B *ff*
 Bb(9) F/A F/Ab C-/G 3 Eb(9) F(9) C(2)
 C Maj7(#5) C *mf*
 Bb/C Db/C
 C(2) C Maj7(#5) 3 Bb/C 3
 Db/C 3 C(2) 3

[laughs] And we definitely get into brushes.

As I said earlier, students in my class get experience at playing in real hardcore jazz situations, so that when they go out to start sitting in around town, it won't be such a shock to them. It's a five-week program, and I've never had more than eight students in a class, so everybody gets to play quite a bit. I don't play too much if I can help it with all that music going on.

RVH: Rod, what do you focus on with your students?

Morgenstein: First off, I should say that I teach privately; I don't do classes. Generally, when I meet people for the first time, I try to find out what *they're* interested in. A lot of them come to study with me because they've followed my career and are fans of the bands I've played with. If that's the case, then I have a pretty good idea of what they're looking for and where their interests lie.

I spent a bit of time analyzing my playing a couple of years ago, in order to make it a little easier to pass on what I do. The general topics that I came up with include one that I call "filling in the holes," which involves an extensive use of ghost strokes. Those are little taps that a lot of people do—some knowingly, some not—where they let the sticks fall on the snare drum. If you can learn to control them, they work wonders with lots of beats and fills.

Most of my students are interested in odd time. I try to make the point that learning odd time is not for the sake of odd time alone. It sort of changes your thinking a little bit, so that when you go back to playing 4/4 you can have a whole lot of new ideas. You can highlight any part of any beat anywhere, because you're so much more comfortable counting things strangely.

I also get people working on swing things, and on some Latin rhythms. I'm not "Mr. Latin" when it comes to playing, but I do sambas and those kinds of things. I stress the importance of all of them, because I think that being able to play a wide variety of things tends to have a

really nice overall effect on the development of your individual style of playing. I know that when I play rock, I don't really play it as a hardcore rock player, because I had a lot of years of swing training and a little bit of Latin playing. With that background, my rock might have a bit of a swing feel to it. So I always try to stress those things.

I also do quite a bit of double-bass work, because a lot of the rock people who come to me are interested in that. Beyond that, I basically focus on what other interests they may have. Some students might come in and not know how to read. I convince them that it is important to read in order to open the doors to all the opportunities we've already discussed—so they don't have to be ticket takers somewhere. They can play drums. You need to be able to read. You can get a lot of nice ideas through reading.

When I first meet my students, I tell them something that I wasn't told when I went to college—something that I think might be lacking in most academic curriculums. Colleges don't prepare you for the real world. They equip you with all the technical things that you need, but then you're spit out into the real world and there's nowhere to go. If you graduate from med school, you get a job. You just open the papers and look. But for a musician, it's really hard. What do you do when you get out of school? You go to New York or L.A. and starve—or so it seems. I was lucky, because my entire band said, "Let's go for it." So I always tell my students that if they have any questions I can answer on anything internally in the music business, I'm more than happy to do so. People have *no idea* how record deals work. Or they'll say, "There's this guy who wants to manage my band, and he wants me to sign this kind of contract..." I think these things carry equal weight with the playing. I certainly don't have all the answers, but I've been involved in enough lawsuits over the years to have some good stories to tell. You never think you're going to be the one to fall into those traps, and then suddenly you find yourself having to hire a lawyer because all this money has been stolen from you.

RVH: You could start a whole new curriculum: "Legal 101 with Rod Morgenstein."

Morgenstein: Well, I do think that a certain amount of bubble-bursting is healthy. For example, one night recently my last student and I left the school together. I was going to the subway, and he wanted to know where my *limo* was. He had a misconception that when you cut a record, you automatically have a limo.

Wallis: I think that's an example of another of the unique aspects of Drummers Collective—having a guy who's been through what Rod has. You're not going to get that in a college where, as Frankie

said, the teachers have been there for 20 years. You're only going to get that in a school with instructors who are out making a living in their particular scene. They can share that experience, which, in cases like Rod mentioned, can really have a big effect on a drummer's life. There is a business side to this art.

RVH: Kim, what's the nature of your class?

Plainfield: With the ten-week bass and drums workshop, we try to cover a number of different styles. We give the students the basic tools to work with in each style, and then try to give everybody a chance to play. We might start out in a 16th-note funk thing. It would either be a little excerpt of a tune or just a particular pattern that they could follow along with to create the conversation between the bass drum and the bass. Then we'll work on increasing the form so that they have a more musical thing to travel through. Then we'll see what spontaneity comes from each student. We do that with each particular style: funk, rock, Latin, etc. We get the basic grooves happening, then try to create a song. We do the same thing with 6/8, some odd times, and some jazz. We work between 6/8 and 4/4—which is a common pattern—learning to understand the underlying pulse and the way the tune works together.

We talk about time and groove. One thing that I do like to stress a lot is feeling. Search for the feeling of something—how it feels to you and what it does to you physically. I've told students that when you go see a happening band that's really rocking, you can't help but tap your foot or clap your hands or move in *some* kind of way. You should be feeling the same thing while you're playing. If you're not, then that's when you have to examine your playing.

WFM: When you're forming these classes, do you group the students by level of ability?

Flickinger: I audition the people who go into our ten-week courses. I'd like to clarify that, while you don't have to audition to study at Drummers Collective, there are certain *programs* here that you do have to audition for. For the certificate program, there's an audition. To get into the ten-week courses, a player has to possess basic reading skills and have a good foundation. In other words, the bass and drums workshop is not for someone who has only been playing for a year. It would be for somebody who's serious about learning that specific aspect of playing and already has facility on the drumset.

The auditioning procedure here is very loose. Usually, I just go into one of our practice rooms with the person auditioning and have him or her play through a variety of styles. I'll also ask them to do some sight-reading so that I get an accurate sense of what level they're at.

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Wallis: Also, depending on the demand for a particular course at a particular time, we may have two levels. We'll group those levels by the participants' proficiency on an instrument.

Flickinger: Students who don't seem ready for one of our group workshops can still get similar information to prepare them for the workshops. I can set up private lessons. For example, if a student comes in and wants to take the studio drumming class with Hank, but doesn't have the reading skills necessary to deal with his charts, I'll suggest that he or she study privately with Hank. That way, the student can either prepare for the group course or just continue to study privately with Hank to get the information. Stu Woods teaches bass here, and Lincoln Goines and Dave Fink are both involved teaching the bass and drums class. If a drummer is not really ready for the bass and drums workshop, I'll suggest that he or she take a private lesson where Stu or Lincoln would play bass, and the student would play drums. It would be a one-on-one lesson in preparation for the class.

RVH: Let's continue with Pete.

Zeldman: I teach private lessons specializing in independence, four-way coordination, and an ambidextrous approach. Reading is very important, because it speeds up the intake of information. But I also use codal systems, because they sometimes

work even faster to incorporate particular idioms of drumming.

I also teach a polyrhythms class that entails odd-time cross-rhythms, artificial groupings, and more than one way of hearing. Have you ever turned on the radio when an awful song was playing, but thought it sounded unbelievable for a second because you had turned it on in the middle and heard 1 in a different place? You were hearing a deceptive 1. Well, I teach ways to hear that *purposely*. One of the ways I teach listening is by hearing different intervals of time, because the odd-time cross-rhythms and polyrhythms are all very related in terms of those intervals. To manipulate all these things, I use codal systems.

I also teach other, less advanced areas—everything from reading to learning different styles. I like to use a lot of ethnic influences like Indian and Asian music, especially in the odd times. And I put a lot of emphasis on originality.

RVH: With all the crossovers of private lessons and classes that take place here, what happens when someone who is really hot on your polyrhythmic concepts walks in to Mike's class and wants to use them while playing "Satin Doll" with a four-piece jazz combo?

Zeldman: That's a good point. It's very important to emphasize where these things are appropriate. Sometimes I tell

my students, "You might not ever use these things, but they will strengthen other aspects of your playing—possibly in a commercial field." To be able to hear what's appropriate and what's not appropriate is another form of listening that must be developed.

Plainfield: When a student comes in to any class, there's always an incredible amount of subjectivity. As teachers, we're talking from our experience: what we've listened to, what we've learned, what we've conceptualized. We try to advise our students as to what can be appropriate in certain areas and not in others. It's a process that stimulates our own thinking.

RVH: Hank, what do you teach in your class?

Jaramillo: I teach a ten-week course that basically deals with studio drumming. I use a lot of extensive practicing, working with the click track, miking, and getting a good drum sound—both for recording and also for live work.

I also teach a point of view that bases everything on the premise that you must have the conviction of the instrument that you're playing. You've got to be definite about what you're playing and stand behind it—because it's going to be recorded. There's a mic' on every one of the drums and a couple above for the cymbals. Therefore, you can't hide and you can't escape. If you're going to play something on the bass drum, you've got to really *play*. You can't just let it flutter around down there. I also teach that drummers should try to get their bass drum foot—or feet—as good as their hands.

For class material, I bring in the charts that I've used on actual jobs. Sometimes I will have tapes of what I do. I focus on the work that I'm into, which is mostly commercial stuff: television, movies, and a lot of jingles. A lot of people don't like jingles, but I do. You're just in there for a short time and then you're out. If you don't like the music, you won't ever have to play it again. Another reason I like jingles is because you get to play with such great players. Everybody's happy at the studio. The reason for *that* is that it pays so well, [laughs]


RVH: It pays well for those who are in there doing it. It's the other 95% who would *like* to be in there that aren't so happy. And that brings us to another question we often receive from our readers: Would coming to Drummers Collective be any kind of "foot in the door" toward getting into the field and working? Hank, are you in a position to recommend one of your students if you can't make a date?

Jaramillo: In my business, I don't have many opportunities to recommend anyone, because if I can't do a session, there's a list of drummers who would be called next. The only time that I would be likely to recommend a sub is for a Broadway show, which I do a lot of.

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Wallis: We have absolutely *never* made a guarantee: "Come to Drummers Collective and you'll be working in 60 days. We'll place you through our placement service." We can't place people. But one thing that I *can* say is that over the ten years that we've operated this school, we have continually gotten calls. A couple of weeks ago, someone called who needed a drummer to do a two-month cruise. Several times we've gotten calls for commercials, where they wanted a drummer to play a set on-camera. One time, someone had to play pots and pans, but they wanted a real drummer to play them rhythmically. We'll recommend students for things like these.

Siegel: The main thing is that we're helping drummers acquire the tools they need to go out and work. Above and beyond that, they're in an environment here where they are, as a matter of course, going to be meeting other musicians. Different gigs can come up. Strictly speaking, we don't have a referral service or anything like that. But if drummers come to New York, study here, apply themselves, and really try to expose themselves—at the school and also around town—to different situations where opportunities might arise, there's a fairly good chance that they're going to get some things happening. Lots of opportunities do exist here.

Wallis: Of course, there's a lot of *competition* here, too. But it does happen; people do get recommended. Then it's up to them. Our teachers here can help along those lines, too. Everybody who's teaching here is successful to different degrees in terms of having done records, TV or movie sound tracks, or tours. Of course, there's no one set of guidelines they can offer to say, "If today you start here, in a year you'll be doing this...." But each teacher can share personal experiences. It comes up a lot during lessons: "How did you get to do the gigs you're doing?" or "How did you get from point A to point B?" Because all the teachers are active players, they can relate their stories, and the students receive "unofficial career guidance" by example.

Siegel: We've had a lot of students who have gone on to work with, or have become, "name" artists. Many others have gone on to work steadily with bands that aren't so famous. We can give a long list of current and former students who are out there doing it. The other side of the coin is that we're also very happy to teach real beginners—as long as they have a determination to learn how to play. If we see students who are really not progressing because they're not putting the time in, then we'll say, "You're wasting your time and money."

RVH: Does Drummers Collective have any sort of actual academic accreditation? Brad mentioned the ten-week certificate program. What is that?

Flickinger: The certificate of completion is our own. Our certificate program has existed for a little over a year. The reason we came up with it in the first place was that a lot of European students were asking for letters verifying that they had studied here. People who teach can come here from Paris for ten weeks and do our program. When they go back, they have a certificate to hang on their wall saying that they studied here.

We're not accredited, and in a certain sense I think that has been a positive thing. We've talked about the differences between a college and our situation. The people who come here to study do so to acquire knowledge. Often, they've already gone out into the workplace, and have found that they weren't satisfied with the way they played, or with their qualifications to get a certain job. What they really needed—more than a college diploma—was the knowledge of how to *play*. When you go out to audition for a gig and say, "I have a master's degree from so-and-so," they'll say, "Great. Let's hear you play." That's what it's about, and that's why people come here to study.

"Coming here" is something I should also address. We understand that coming here from outside New York or from Europe can be really intimidating. We have striven to be in a position where we can help people in terms of making their plans. We can't provide housing, per se, but we *can* recommend some places that are reasonable and safe and fairly convenient to the school. I also think that, once people come, the school really serves as a center of operation for them. At any given time, we have several students who are here from far away. I think that they would all say that the atmosphere here provides a place where they can be comfortable. I think everybody who has studied here has made friends among the students and teachers. I just want to stress to anyone who's thinking of coming here from far away that it might not be as overwhelming as they think. The best thing to do is call or write to us.

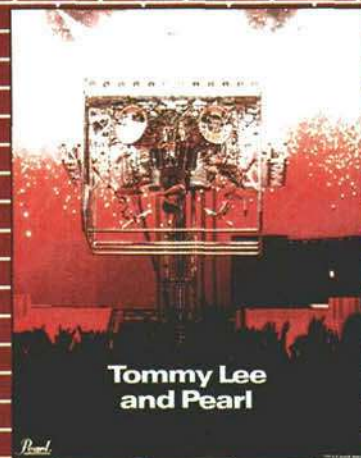
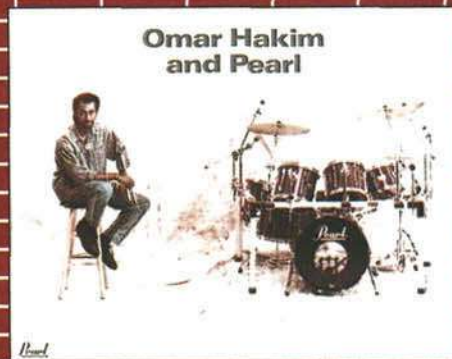
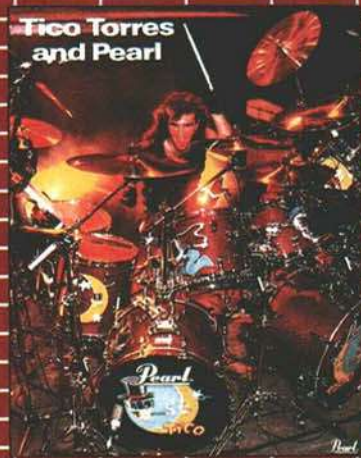
Wallis: I'd like to add that Drummers Collective is the only school of its kind, as far as I know, that deals exclusively with drums. It's run by drummers—people who can relate to the students every step of the way. Whatever level they're coming in at, whatever problems or good things that they have to bring with them, we can relate to them directly.

I'd also like to invite anyone who's ever in New York City to come up and see what the school is about. There are always teachers up here. Everyone is free to call or write, and if they have specific questions, come by. The doors are always open.



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Drum Teachers

Every now and then some top pro says something like, "The only people teaching drums are people who can't really play." This is a pretty broad statement. It is sometimes followed by a comment such as, "Teachers and drum books are a waste of time."

It is interesting to note that Steve Gadd, Graham Lear, Louie Bellson, Ed Shaughnessy, Harvey Mason, Larrie Londin, Joe Morello, Max Roach, Tony Williams, Dom Famularo, Joey Farris, Vinnie Colaiuta, Dave Weckl, Steve Smith, and Danny Gottlieb—to name a few—have all spent some time with drum teachers. Each one of these great players has his own style, his own point of view, and his own way of doing things. It would seem that the various teachers these players learned from certainly did nothing to hinder their talent or development.

This is not to say that every drum teacher is qualified. I have met some pretty strange characters during my career—some

of them "borderline crazies." However, some were among the finest people that I have ever known. For example, my first professional teacher was Jack Miller, back in Kansas City. (Jack is now a golf pro in Florida.) Jack took me to my first live concert when I was a teenager, and since I lived some distance away from Kansas City, he let me stay at his house overnight. He took me to dinner and fed me breakfast the next day. At the concert, I saw Buddy Rich and Louie Bellson for the first time. My excitement at seeing such wonderful players in person was so great that it is still etched firmly in my memory. As if that weren't enough, because I had stayed overnight, I met Louie Bellson in person at the studio the next day. Louie and I are fast friends to this day.

That concert and meeting Louie the following day changed my life. Of all the things I learned from Jack, this was without a doubt the most important thing that he ever did for me. This was more than a drum lesson. Jack was a real friend. He gave me great encouragement, recommended me for my first professional road gig, and was always completely honest. At one point, he said, "I've shown you all that I can. You should take some lessons from some other people. Each one will have something to offer."

Jack suggested that I contact Jim Chapin if and when I got to New York City. I did, and Jim recommended me for my first playing job in New York. He took me along on jobs he was playing so that I could learn about the music business. It was much more than a teacher/student relationship; we were, and still are, good friends.

Without question, I learned some valuable techniques and musical insights from Jim. But more than that, he gave encouragement, advice, help, and whatever else he could when I needed it. He was, and still is, a positive, energetic, and sharing person.

I later studied with Henry Adler. Again I learned some valuable things about drumming. Henry also helped me to negotiate my contract with Benny Goodman, published my first drum books, and gave me advice when I had trouble collecting my salary from a couple of bandleaders. Henry introduced me to many of the top drummers in New York at that time and, like Jim Chapin, remains a real friend.

These personal experiences were all

positive, but I've also had some negative experiences with a couple of bad teachers. I prefer, however, to concentrate on the positive ones.

Good teachers can be friends, sources of information, role models, and people you can really talk to. Good teachers supply much more than reading exercises or rudiments; they supply attitudes. If these attitudes are positive, they become a sort of fuel, or energy, when things get tough later on. Positive attitudes about learning can be helpful for an entire lifetime. The self-discipline I learned from studying drums helps me today. For example, being on time, meeting deadlines, saving money for lessons, organizing my practice time, and taking care of equipment are only a few of the disciplines that help me manage a hectic schedule today with little strain.

Good teachers also share their love of drumming and music. They share their experiences of dealing with club owners, managers, and other musicians. They share their enthusiasm for drumming and music, and will often talk about a great concert or meeting some of the great players. Good teachers share their hard times with you, because they know it is sometimes easier, when the going gets tough, to know that someone you look up to has had some ups and downs as well.

Yes, a good teacher is more than merely techniques and exercises. And I can assure you, *teaching is an art*. Great teachers help to bring out the best in you. In many cases, truly great teachers produce students who play much better than the teachers themselves ever did. Teaching is also very rewarding when you help players on their way to achieving their potential. Real teaching is a partnership based on trust and honesty. It can be one of the strongest and most lasting friendships you can ever have.

So, look for a teacher if you are so inclined, and keep looking until you find someone who fulfills your needs. Study with several teachers over a period of time. You will be able to tell which ones can help you and which ones can't. And remember, drummers who criticize teaching are usually incapable of teaching. The reason for this is that true teaching is not programming, it is *sharing*. So let's give a little credit to the many fine teachers who give of themselves as well as their knowledge. They make a great contribution to drumming and to all of us.



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Ergonomics

Today's technology has produced its own vocabulary, including a number of terms that are hybrids of words used in science, industry, academics, etc. Among those that I find most interesting is the word "ergonomics." I looked through several dictionaries to make sure I understood the word's proper usage before basing a column on it. I *had* to look through several; most didn't have it at all, and of the two that did, one simply said, "See biotechnology."

Undaunted, I ultimately found a definition that supported what I had thought the word meant all along. Paraphrased, ergonomics is the science involved with the relationship of the human body to work, including the physics of motion, mechanics, the design of physical objects such as tools and equipment, etc.

I wanted to be clear on this, because I have been thinking a great deal lately about the relationship of a drummer's body to the drumset, and how one element of that relationship can affect another. I've had occasion to speak to some highly qualified medical people on recent *MD* assignments, and have received correspondence from some readers relating to physical problems that they were having. Adding some reflections on my own past experiences and present playing situation, I came to one inescapable conclusion: Drummers need to be concerned with *ergonomics* more than any other instrumentalists.

It's a simple fact that the drumset is the most physically oriented instrument of all. A drumkit must literally be built around the drummer, and must fit his or her physical makeup. But there are some nuances of this "tailoring" process that many drummers are not aware of. If not addressed, these nuances can have repercussions taking many forms, including impaired playing ability, reduced comfort, and physical injury. Let's take a moment to evaluate the relationship of a drummer's body to a drumkit, and discuss a few points that you might not have considered when creating your current setup.

I want to preface the following comments by saying that this column, as usual, is written from the perspective of the full-time club drummer. Our theoretical drummer plays five or six nights a week, for four to five hours per night. With this in mind, considerations such as comfort, fatigue, and physical impact on the body over a long period of time are of major importance. Part-time drummers, or even

top touring professionals who probably play harder but for much shorter periods of time, may or may not be affected as dramatically as this theoretical club drummer would be. Realize, also, that different styles of music tend to have different traditional setups, and that visual image is sometimes a large part of a given drummer's drumkit arrangement. But the suggestions that follow still bear some consideration by drummers who play in any style and at any level of the business.

Gravity

You can't fight gravity and win—not for long, at any rate. The earth is a lot bigger and stronger than you are, and consequently can exert a lot more force than you can. The oldest principle of physics is that "what goes up must come down," and any effort to contradict this principle is going to take a great deal of energy to maintain. That's why jet engines are so big and require so much fuel. This principle applies to drumkits primarily when it comes to the height and angle of cymbals (and also rack toms, to a lesser degree). The higher and farther away from you the cymbals are, the more energy (and time) it takes to overcome gravity in order to reach up and hit them; it's as simple as that. Conversely, the lower and closer your cymbals are, the less energy it takes to play them.

This equation is most important when it comes to ride cymbals and hi-hats (including remote hi-hats). Sustaining a complicated or fast ride pattern is difficult enough without having to do it on a cymbal that's shoulder high or above. You should make every effort (no pun intended) to keep your ride cymbal and/or hi-hat(s) at a level that maximizes relaxation in your arm, rather than tension or strain. Under most circumstances, the human arm works best for this purpose when held comfortably at the side, with a more or less 90-degree bend at the elbow. I realize that the position of drums on the kit may make this precise position impossible, but the closer you can come to it, the better your endurance will be, and the better time you will be able to maintain over the course of a long, tiring evening. The stick should be able to strike the cymbal in as close to a parallel plane as possible. That means that if the cymbal is absolutely horizontal, you should be able to comfortably hold the stick virtually horizontally above it; if the cymbal is angled slightly, you should

be able to angle the stick to the same degree just as comfortably.

Crash cymbals obviously are not played as much as rides and hi-hats, but they generally require more impact force when they are struck. This means that keeping them within a relaxed and comfortable reach is very important. They should also be angled in such a way that your wrist doesn't have to go into unnatural contortions in order to get the body of the drumstick into the body of the cymbal. Acute angles are generally good only if you want to *minimize* stick impact (as on a very soft jazz gig), since it becomes almost impossible to do anything but glance off the cymbal with a stick tip.

Rack tom height and angle relate to gravity as well, since a drummer generally has to lift his or her sticks up above the main "playing level" of the snare drum in order to strike the toms. Again, the higher or farther the sticks have to travel to get up above the toms and back down into them again with sufficient impact force, the more effort is going to be required. It isn't accidental that the big-band drummers of the '40s tended to set their toms fairly low and flat. They were playing long gigs and fighting a lot of other sound on stage. They needed to maximize their efforts while conserving their energy, and the low, flat positions of their drums and cymbals evolved from that need. With today's miking systems, club drummers may not need to expend as much energy just to be heard, but the gigs are just as long, and the playing often even more strenuous. Consequently, the need to conserve energy is every bit as great.

Anatomy

The human body is designed to operate in a very limited number of ways. It has remarkable flexibility within those parameters, but does not suffer extended abuse without some reaction—usually in the form of injury or impaired performance. With that in mind, let's look at the relationship of the drummer's body to the position of the bass drum—perhaps the starting point of virtually every drumkit setup.

We've been brought up on photos of drummers sitting proudly behind their kits, with their bass drums facing straight forward so that the illustration on the front head (be it company logo, drummer's initials, or illuminated tropical scene) is clearly visible. They, too, are faced directly forward so that we can see their



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smiling faces. *What's wrong with this picture?*

Most drummers see nothing wrong with it, and that's the way they set up: drums and drummer facing straight ahead. But if the bass drum is facing straight ahead, that means that the bass drum pedal is pointing straight back at the drummer. This creates a need for what I believe is an unnatural "turning in" of the bass drum foot.

Take a moment to do the following exercise: Sit in a reasonably high, straight-backed chair (or on a drum throne if it's handy). Close your eyes, relax completely, and imagine that you have a snare drum on a stand in front of you. Lift your legs so that your feet are off the ground a couple of inches. Remaining totally relaxed, allow your feet to drop to the floor. You should notice that your feet will land with the toes slightly turned out. In fact, most people stand, and even walk, with their feet in this position. It is my contention that in order to maximize strength, speed, and endurance (and minimize potential damage to the musculature of the leg and foot), the angle of the bass drum pedal should conform to the angle of the foot—not the other way around. This means that if *you* wish to face straight forward, the pedal should angle slightly to the outside of your body (left or right, depending on which foot you use) and the bass drum should be slightly offset accordingly. If you want the *bass drum* to face straight forward, you should angle your body slightly to one side or the other in order to maintain a natural foot-to-pedal relationship. (Double-bass drummers have an advantage here; their setup automatically conforms to this principle.) The hi-hat should be positioned in the same manner for the remaining foot.

Some drummers try to get around this situation by setting the bass drum facing straight forward, but allowing their foot to angle naturally across the pedal plate (instead of turning the foot at the ankle to correspond to the pedal). While this may reduce the risk of problems for their bod-

ies, it likely will increase the risk of damage to their pedals, since the forces operating on the pedals are not in accordance with the forces they were designed to withstand.

This particular point of ergonomics has a very practical benefit—which I learned by experience. Several years ago, while playing a six-night-a-week Top-40 gig, I developed a lump behind my left knee that was diagnosed as a "Baker's cyst." There was no obvious reason for its onset; I had suffered no injury to the area. Nevertheless, it grew to a point where it interfered with the muscles in the area, making it difficult for me to play and painful to walk. Two visits to the doctor to have the cyst drained did not prevent its reoccurrence. I was informed that unless the actual cause was found and remedied, I would face surgery.

It was at this time that I realized that my drumkit setup had grown in the previous months, forcing my hi-hat farther and farther to my left. Since my legs are short, I was unable to maintain a natural foot-to-pedal relationship on the hi-hat. Instead, I had been turning my left foot out several degrees in order to operate the pedal, while angling my lower leg slightly down and to the left from my knee at the same time. Thinking that this might have something to do with the development of the cyst, I altered my drumkit to put the hi-hat back into the optimum position: with my foot squarely upon the pedal, and at absolutely the most natural angle achievable. Within a week, the cyst had noticeably reduced in size; within a month it had disappeared.

Physics and Physiology

Nowhere is ergonomics more important to a drummer than the question of seat height. Of course, "correct" seat height is a matter determined by many factors, and has no absolute definition. There has long been controversy over whether a drummer achieves more power by sitting high or low, and questions regarding control,

speed, etc., also come into the issue. But there are certain physical factors that should also be taken into account when you are in the process of determining what seat height is correct for *you*. In addition to the musical considerations, take into account your body's need for constant, unrestricted circulation. The edge of a too-high seat can cut into the undersides of the thighs, pinching major blood vessels and causing numbness in the lower limbs. A seat too high *or* too low can provide improper balance, causing the body to move in unnatural manners in order to remain balanced. A too-high seat can cause upper and middle back strain (due to resultant "drummer's slouch"), and lower back problems can develop from a too-low seat that puts most of the upper body's weight on the lower spine. I can't recommend a specific "norm" in this area; all I can do is encourage you to examine your seat height with these considerations in mind.

Efficiency

The other part of the body-to-work relationship that makes up ergonomics is the "work" part. It's important to think about ways to make your means of "operating" as efficient as possible. After all, the more efficiently you work, the less energy you expend.

One way of saving both time and energy is to minimize your setup and breakdown requirements. We've discussed this subject before, but let me reiterate that it's to a drummer's advantage to use the largest trap case that he or she can comfortably handle (and that will fit into his or her vehicle). The object is to avoid having to disassemble stands as much as possible. This makes breakdowns faster and easier, and makes setups faster and more uniform.

It's also advantageous to have your setup as much the same from gig to gig as possible (through the use of memory locks, color-coded tape, "spike marks" on rugs and risers, etc.). This allows your body to get used to the setup, and makes movements around the kit more fluid, comfortable, and energy-efficient.

Conclusion

The object of raising all of these points is not to try to tell you how you should set up your drumkit, or why you should change *your* concept of playing to suit *mine*. My hope is that these suggestions will get you thinking about the critical relationship that exists among your body, your instrument, and the work that the two do together that ultimately comes out as "drumming." An awareness of the ergonomics of drumming should help you to keep that relationship harmonious for many years to come.



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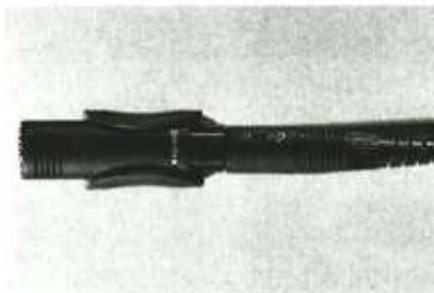
MKT-13

Beyer Percussion Mic' Group/Zildjian ZMC-1

Choosing the proper microphones for a drumset can be difficult. There are hundreds of different mic's available today, and it's a challenge to find out which ones are good for reproducing the sounds of the drumset. Much of the literature available on microphones is too technical, and doesn't really answer the question of what mic' sounds good on what drum. Even recording and live-sound engineers aren't that much help, because they often have very differing opinions on miking drums. So what's the answer? The Beyerdynamic microphone company has come up with a complete line of mic's designed specifically for the drumset.

After years of being known as a high-quality manufacturer of general-purpose microphones, Beyer has taken that knowledge and focused it on the drumset (and percussion). They have designed a microphone for each individual component of the drumset, including the snare drum, hi-hat, rack toms, floor toms, bass drum, and cymbals (overheads). According to Beyer, they considered each of these components as separate instruments that produce unique frequency ranges. With that in mind, they created mic's specifically designed for the demands of these instruments.

For this review, we tested these microphones in live situations with a band, as well as in a recording studio. I would like to thank engineer Chris Otazo of the Museum Recording Studios of Kearny, NJ for his assistance and technical knowledge. We tested the microphones "flat," meaning with no EQ (equalization), so we could hear exactly what the mic's were picking up without their being enhanced. Overall, we found these mic's give a very accurate reproduction of the sound of the instrument: They don't alter the basic sounds of the drums.



M422

The *M 422* is designed for use on the snare drum and hi-hat. The first thing you notice about this mic' is its size: it's much smaller than most general-purpose microphones. This is an excellent feature for both a hi-hat and a snare drum mic' because it makes it much easier to position the microphone without it being in the way. For me this is quite a plus, because I mount my snare drum mic' with an attachment on my snare drum, and the small, lightweight design of this mic' makes it much easier to position compared to the mic' I usually use.

On a more technical level, Beyer states that the frequency response of the *M 422* is 100 to 12,000 Hz, with a low-end roll-off point at 500 Hz. What this basically means is that this mic' is designed to pick up the higher frequencies produced by the hi-hat and snare drum, and leave out some of the low-end frequencies that can cause feedback problems (which then need to be EQ'ed out anyway). The polar pattern (the way in which the microphone picks up the sound) is a supercardioid type, which means that it picks up sound coming directly at it, but not from behind. This helps in eliminating "bleed" from instruments other than the hi-hat or snare drum.

As far as the sound of the *M 422* goes, both the engineer I worked with and I were amazed at the high-end sound that this mic' picked up. It works perfectly with the hi-hat, giving the hats a very clear sound on tape as well as live. On the snare drum, this mic' worked well on a medium-to-high tensioned drum (a la Stewart Copeland or Neil Peart), because it accurately reproduced that sound. However, you might want to consider a different mic' for the snare if you prefer a "fatter" sound (I'll cover this point shortly). Overall, the *M 422* is an excellent hi-hat and snare drum

mic'. The list price for the *M 422* is \$125.00.



M420

Beyer's microphone for rack toms is the *M 420*, and is only slightly longer than the *M 422*. Once again, I preferred its size to other mic's I have used, especially live, because the *M 420* was easy to position and didn't block the audience's view of me.

The frequency response of the *M 420* is 100 to 12,000 Hz, with a low-end roll-off point of 100 Hz. Even though the frequency response is the same as the *M 422*, since the low-end frequency roll-off point is lower, the *M 420* picks up more of the low-end sound produced from rack toms. The polar pattern for the *M 420* is a hypercardioid type. Because of this polar pattern, one *M 420* per rack tom will deliver the best sound. However, Beyer also states that this mic' can be used for two rack toms if placed equidistant and above the two drums. I found this to be true, but for greater separation, one mic' per tom did work best.

I found that the *M 420* brings out the high-end attack sound of the toms, without giving the drum a thin sound. Of course, as you move the mic' closer or further away from the drum, the amount of attack and room sound change. I really liked the *M 420* on my higher toms down to the 13". It brought out the tone from the higher toms, and still gave them a good attack sound. When I got to my 14" rack tom, I preferred another mic' (which I'll mention later).

Even though Beyer doesn't mention the *M 420* as being one of their primary snare drum mic's, I found it worked very well with a lower pitched, deeper snare drum. As I mentioned before when discussing the *M 422*, the sound of that mic' worked better on a higher-tensioned drum, such as on

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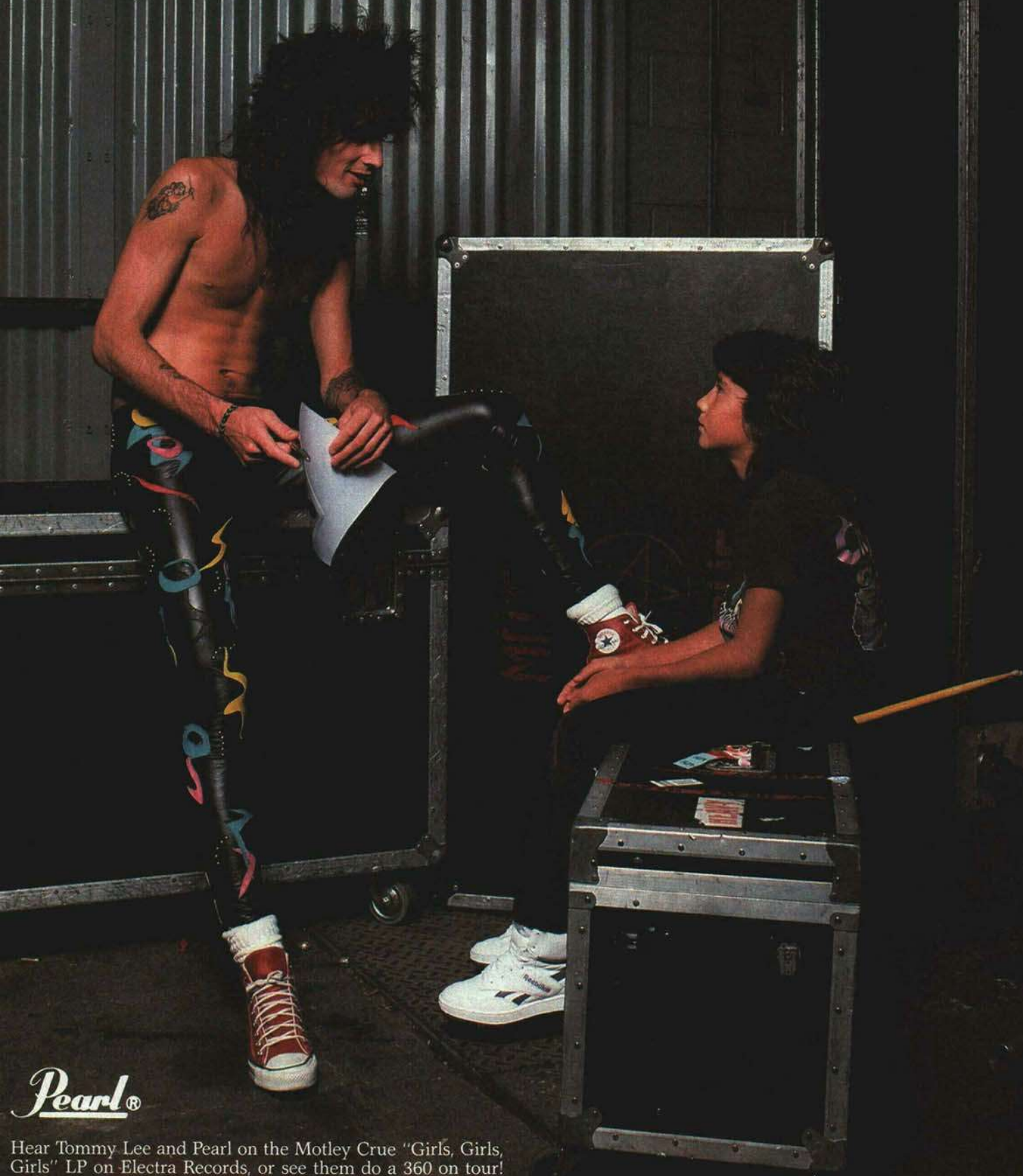
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my 5" metal snare. However, it was a little high-end sounding on my 8" wood snare. With the *M 420* on the 8" snare, some of those lower frequencies that were missing before were now there, giving the drum a nice fat sound. The list price for the *M 420* is \$190.00.



M201

The *M 201* is the microphone Beyer designed for use as a floor tom mic' and as an overhead mic'. This mic' is slightly longer than the *M 420*, but still smaller than most mic's used for the same purposes. It's clear that Beyer researched the needs of drummers as well as sound engineers when designing these mic's.

The frequency response on the *M 201* is very wide: 40 to 18,000 Hz. Because of

this wide range, the *M 201* works well as either a floor tom mic' or as an overhead mic'. The polar pattern is also a hypercardioid type. According to Beyer, this mic' (like the *M 420*, which has the same type of polar pattern) can be used to mike two floor toms, but "a mic' on each drum will give greater control and better results." I found this to be true.

As a floor tom mic', the *M 201* has a very good sound. Because of its wide frequency response, the floor tom sounds very full, yet with a nice sharp impact sound. I also liked this mic' on my 14" rack tom because it brought out a few more low frequencies than the *M 420*. However, I should point out that, depending on how tightly you tension your heads, you might prefer the *M 420* all the way down. Since I tension my 14" rather loosely, the *M 201* sounded a little better to me.

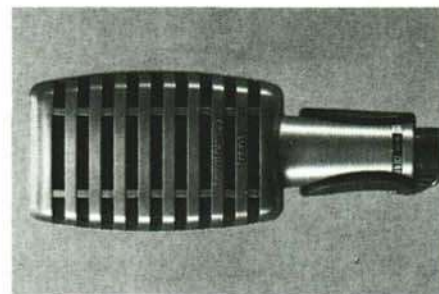
As an overhead mic', the *M 201*'s ability to pick up higher frequencies works well in reproducing cymbal sounds. The recorded cymbal sound that these mic's produced was well defined, and brought out the higher tones of the cymbals without distorting. The *M 201*'s list price is \$265.00.



M69

The *M 69* is another mic' that Beyer designed for two functions. One is to mike the floor tom, and the other is to mike two rack toms or floor toms with only one *M 69*. Its frequency response is 50 to 16,000 Hz, and the polar pattern is a hypercardioid type.

The *M 69* does work well when miking two drums at once—a very common practice, especially in a live setting. Two important points you should consider when miking your drums for live performance are how much money you can afford to spend on mic's, and how elaborate a P.A. system you are working with. Only you know how much you can afford to spend. But when it comes to the P.A., you may not be able to individually mike each drum on your kit; perhaps your P.A. isn't large enough to handle that many inputs, for example. In this case, you need a mic' that can effectively pick up sounds from two drums at once. Of all the Beyer mic's I tested, I thought the *M 69* worked best in this situation. As far as the sound of the microphone, the *M 69* produces a slightly rounder sound than either the *M 420* or the *M 207*. The *M 60*'s list price is \$199.00.



M380

The *M 380* is Beyer's primary bass drum microphone, and it's a killer. The frequency response is 15 to 20,000 Hz, which means it can reproduce sounds lower than the human ear is capable of hearing. It's those low frequencies that give an extra amount of weight and bottom end to the sound. The polar pattern is what is known as a figure eight. Because of the way this mic' picks up sound, where you position it can have a big effect on the sound of the drum. That versatility is an advantage, especially in the studio.

As with all of these microphones, the *M 380* reproduces the sound of the drum very clearly. The literature on this mic' states

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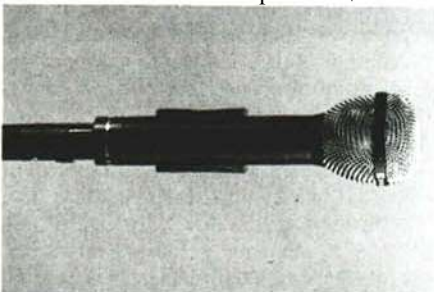
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that moving the *M 380* closer to the head adds warmth and fullness, and moving it back emphasizes the high-frequency "click." I have a medium-sized hole cut in the front head of my bass drum, and when I placed the *M 380* through the hole and closer to the batter head, the tone of the drum became rounder. When I positioned the mic' right outside the drum in front of the hole, the sound had more attack and less boom. Even though that may seem just the opposite of the way most mic's work, in this case, it happens because of the polar pickup pattern.

I must say this bass drum mic' impressed me and the engineer I worked with. Live, the bass drum sound was very clear, and for once I could hear the sound of the drum (my sound) and not just the loud thud I normally get. In the studio, the clarity of this mic' was also exceptional. And as I previously mentioned, by changing the mic' placement, the amount of attack and fullness changed, but not the clarity of the sound. The *M 380's* list price is \$285.00.

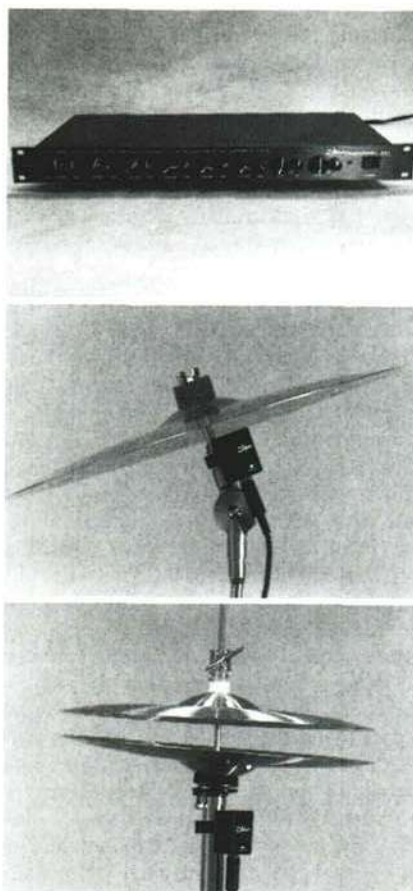


M88

The *M 88* is another bass drum microphone from Beyer. Its frequency response is 30 to 20,000 Hz—not quite as low as the *M 380's*. The polar pattern is a hypercardioid type, which is different from the figure-eight pattern of the *M 380*. Some engineers prefer the cardioid-type pickup pattern for the bass drum mic'.

The *M 88* has a good, clear bottom end sound with plenty of attack. Unlike the *M 380*, mic' positioning is not as critical to the sound of the *M 88*. The impact sound was greater when the *M 88* was placed closer to the batter head, through the hole in the front head. Since the shape of this mic' is different from the *M 380* (see photo), it is easier to place it inside the bass drum if you have a smaller hole in the front head. The *M 88's* list price is \$330.00.

Beyer's concept of creating a line of microphones tailored for the individual needs of the drumset is an excellent and long overdue idea. With the quality I've seen and heard from these microphones, Beyer is a microphone you should check out. For further information and an educational manual on the mic's discussed and a few others available in the drumset line, send \$3.00 to Beyer Dynamic Inc., 5-05 Burns Avenue, Hicksville NY 11801.



Zildjian ZMC-1

In the past, cymbal miking has been mostly limited to standard, overhead miking. This conventional manner has a whole list of problems associated with it, and nothing really new has turned up to address these problems, until now. The Zildjian Cymbal Company has combined its forces with Barcus-Berry, a company known for its high-quality pickups and microphones, to come up with a miking system specifically designed for cymbal amplification. The *ZMC-1* is the result.

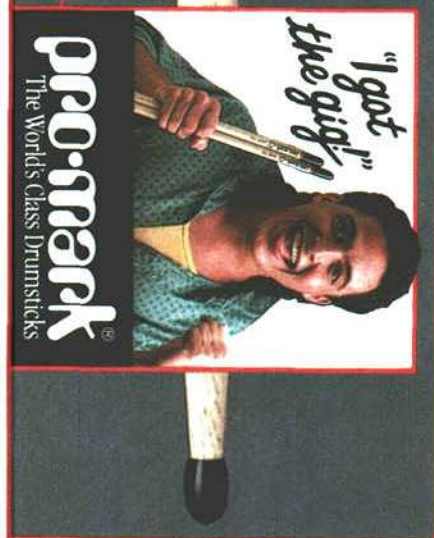
The *ZMC-1* microphone system consists of a specially designed six-channel mixer, which, among other things, supplies power to the microphones. Along with the mixer, six specially designed microphones (one for hi-hat, five for cymbals) make up the rest of the system. In very basic terms, the *ZMC-1* system allows the drummer to individually mike each cymbal and the hi-hat, and have complete control over the "mix" of the cymbals.

The *ZMC-7's* six-channel mixer is specifically designed for use with *ZMC-1* mic's only. The *ZMC-1* mixer features: five individual channels for cymbals with 1/4" input and output jacks, a specially designed hi-hat channel with custom equalization (EQ) adjustment, volume and stereo panning controls for each channel, master left and right volume controls, an effects loop on each master channel (2), and outputs via left and right xlr-type and

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'A' connectors and/or individual "A" output jacks for each channel. In addition, it has a standard, 19" chassis designed for mounting in one EIA rack space. All of these different features allows the *ZMC-1* to be used in a variety of combinations.

The *ZMC-1* mixer is very versatile. It essentially takes six incoming signals and allows you to control each individual channel's level and how much of the individual signal's sound is coming out from either side of the P.A. (pan). It also allows you to add different outboard effects to any or all of the channels, and to either have individual mic' outputs or two outputs (left and right) to a P.A. An obvious advantage of the mixer is that it allows you to take six channels of cymbals, and with complete control of the individual levels, run only two outputs to the main P.A. or recording console.

There are many different ways to set up the *ZMC-1* mixer. The owner's manual, which comes with the unit, clearly explains the different ways to use the mixer. In my experimentation with this unit, I found the whole design to be very easy to understand and operate. All of the functions worked as indicated. However, the special hi-hat channel has an additional EQ adjustment that I found changed the sound of the hi-hats only very slightly.

The microphones for the *ZMC-1* are specially designed for cymbal use, and are powered by the *ZMC-1* mixer. The mic's connect to the mixer using male-to-male 'A' cords (guitar cables), which *are not* included with the unit. The mic' itself is rectangularly shaped and quite small (see photo). These mic's do not need stands, because they mount onto your existing cymbal stands, directly below the cymbal, just above the tiller, and as close to the cymbal as possible. With the hi-hat, the microphone mounts just below the bottom cymbal on the hi-hat stand. Since these mic's don't require stands and are basically mounted underneath the cymbals, they are virtually invisible to an audience.

The polar pickup pattern of the *ZMC-1* microphone is a new configuration, and is designed to pick up sounds through the sides of the mic', not through its top. To quote Zildjian, "Sound enters the *ZMC-1* through unique side ports. This forms a completely new pickup pattern." Placing a microphone so close to a cymbal initially concerned me that the sound would distort, but with the pickup pattern operating as it does, there was no distortion or overdriving of the mic'.

I did have a problem with one aspect of these microphones: The mounting clip is not quite universal (see photo). I have Yamaha and Sonor cymbal stands on my kit, and with the Yamaha stands, the mount attached perfectly above the tiller

and below the cymbal. Unfortunately, the clip size was too small to accommodate my Sonor stands. After contacting Zildjian, they said that they were aware of the problem, and that the clip fits on most drum companies' stands except for Sonor. This may be a minor point, but I think that a different mounting design for the clip, one that is adjustable, would be an improvement. The way the clip works now, it is more likely to wear out after time than an adjustable mount would.

How does the whole thing sound, you ask? Well, the cymbal sound through this system is *very* good. The *ZMC-1* does solve many of the problems associated with normal overhead miking. First of all, the separation that these mic's have is great! Since they are mounted so close to the cymbal, and also because of the microphone's unique pickup pattern, very few sounds outside that of the cymbal are picked up. Secondly, compared to overhead miking, there is almost no phasing with the *ZMC-1*. (Phasing is caused by sound waves from the same source arriving at different times, creating variances in the sound of the cymbal.)

One rather surprising feature of the *ZMC-1* is that the volume stays consistent no matter where you play the cymbal. I recorded a ride cymbal, and because of the pickup pattern of the mic's, the bell of the cymbal was the same volume level as the bow of the cymbal (when struck at the same volume). The hi-hat mic' also sounded consistent and even, both when struck with a stick or played with the foot. With all of the mic's, there was no distortion of the signal, no matter what type of cymbal I tested. The amplified cymbal sound produced by the *ZMC-1* is as true to an unmiked cymbal sound as I have heard.

After selling up the *ZMC-1* with my cymbals, I started experimenting with controlling the different output levels on the *ZMC-1*'s mixer. I was able to bring back the levels of my louder cymbals, such as my China types, and boost the signal of cymbals that don't normally get heard in louder musical sections, like small crashes. This is the type of thing that you could never do with overhead mic's.

For the most part, I am very impressed with the *ZMC-1*. It's a new idea that works. As I mentioned, the only problem I had with it was with the mount design, and that's not a major problem for Zildjian to overcome. If you do check out this system, take along your cymbal stands and make sure the clips do fit. All that aside, when you consider that this system is easy to transport and set up, doesn't need mic' stands, has a mixer that can be set up in many different combinations, is easy to operate, and most importantly, sounds great, it's obvious that this could become the way to mike cymbals. Price: \$995.00.



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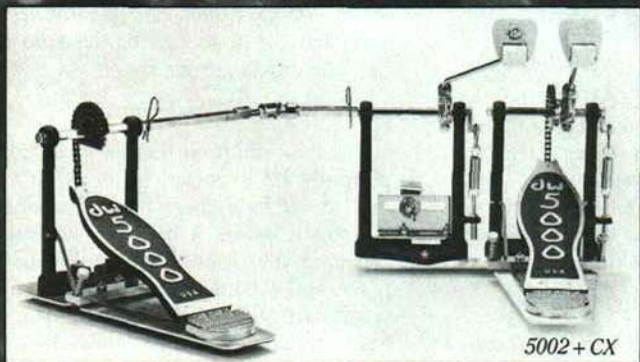
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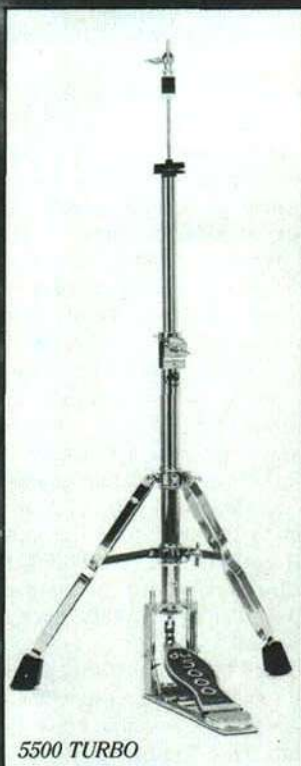
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sort of sound right up to a tighter, jazzier sound. Short of deliberately off-tuning the heads, there was nothing I could do to make these drums sound *bad*. Gretsch's shells are of six-ply maple, with no reinforcing hoops. They are coated inside with a silver sealant, which may or may not be part of "That Great Gretsch Sound," but has certainly been on the inside of Gretsch shells for as long as I can remember. Each drum carries its own serial number on a tag inside the shell.

In terms of looks, the finish of the shells was impeccable. The burnt orange color is one of seven colored stains (along with black, white, and yellow plastic coverings) available as "standard." A veritable rainbow of additional colors are available at a 10% extra charge. The chrome plating on all the drum hardware was flawless. The drums were fitted with *Permatone* heads, made for Gretsch by Remo. The toms and bass drum had *Pinstripe* batter heads and *Ebony Ambassador* bottom heads; the snare featured a coated *Ambassador* batter. The look of the black bottom heads against the burnt orange shells was quite striking. Interestingly, each of the toms was drilled with two airholes—each surrounded by a logo badge—positioned roughly 90 degrees from each other. I don't know whether Gretsch wants to make sure the drums can "breathe" or make sure that the logo can be seen no matter how the drums are set up.

Bass Drum

The bass drum on this kit sounded huge, as might be expected from its 18" depth. Just to see how "big" I could safely leave the sound before it became overpowering, I played the drum with double heads in place and no internal muffling. I taped a small felt strip to the batter head, rather than stretching it under the counterhoop in the "traditional" manner. My band *loved* the sound! All I had to do was *touch* the drum in order to get a nice, full sound, even at low volume. When I really laid into it, the drum rattled the walls of the club. The "boominess" was very noticeable when the drum was played alone, of course, but was eaten up by the amps when the band was playing. This left only the sound of an incredibly powerful bass drum—perfect for power rock, dramatic ballads, and even softer tunes where depth was desired. (After all, I didn't *have* to hit it hard.) When playing funk, I padded the drum down for a tighter sound, and it retained that wonderful depth. In either case, a hard beater helped add a bit more

It's been quite a while since a Gretsch drumkit was reviewed in MD's pages; the most recent was the company's lower-priced *Blackhawk* model, back in 1983. Since then, the company has undergone a buyout, significant changes in management personnel, and a factory relocation. As a result, many drummers have expressed interest in the status of today's Gretsch pro-level drums. With that in mind, I tested a representative kit from what Gretsch is now calling its *Factory Custom* series. This name reflects the company's philosophy that all of its pro-level drums are of custom quality, and that all of its drumsets can be custom-ordered (on an "à la carte" basis) to suit the individual customer—even though the drums are being produced to be as readily available for order as any other "factory production" brand.

The kit I tested was a seven-piece *Fusion* kit in a custom version that featured all of Gretsch's most popular options, in terms of drum sizes, heads, etc. It was comprised of an 18x22 bass drum, 8x8, 8x10, 10x12, and 12x14 rack toms, and a 14x16

suspended "floor" tom. All of the toms came with RIMS suspension mounts as a factory-installed option. The snare drum included with the kit was an 8x14 wood-shell model. The kit was finished in a natural wood grain stained in what Gretsch calls its burnt orange color.

General Comments

I'll be honest and say that I've heard a lot of griping about the Gretsch company over the past several years—regarding poor hardware design, slow delivery time, etc. (The company's new management team is working to address those problems, according to a spokesman.) But I can't remember *ever* hearing anyone say anything negative about the *sound* of Gretsch drums, and I'm certainly not going to start here. The kit I tested sounded absolutely great! The drums were loud, lively, and cutting, yet warm and rich at the same time. There was nothing abrasive about them at all, even when tuned for maximum volume. I experimented with a variety of tunings, going from a very deep, boomy "Phil Collins"

PERFORMANCE PROVEN.

DW pedals and the
drummers who use them.

5000 TURBO



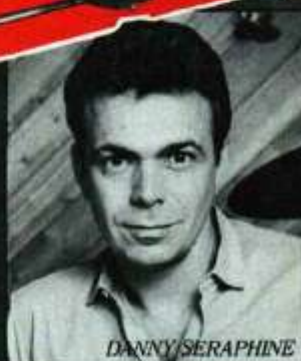
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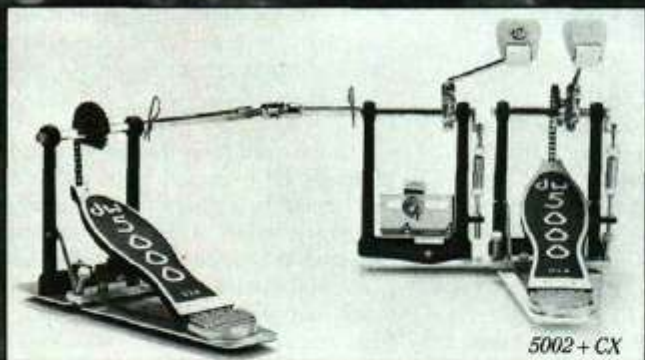
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5500 TURBO



For a DW T-Shirt send \$8.50 along with your name and address. Specify S, M, L or XL.
To receive the latest DW catalogs send \$2.00 to cover postage and handling.

Drum Workshop, Inc., 2697 Lavery Ct. #16, Newbury Park, CA 91320, 818-499-6863

stand if the tripod height and/or the boom extension and angle remain variable. I used tape to mark these adjustments where memory collars were not supplied, but I wish manufacturers would relieve me of the necessity for this.

Looking at the hardware individually, Gretsch's *T-4849 Deluxe Hi-Hat* featured an adjustable, external tension spring, an oversized footplate with a removable toe-stop (that I wanted to remove but couldn't because the screw was so tight!), and all other familiar hi-hat features. It worked quietly and smoothly. The one unique aspect of this hi-hat was the pull-rod: It was much too long. When set up, the rod extended up so high that it interfered with the small tom that I normally position over the hi-hat cymbals. It would be a simple matter to saw off the extra length, of course; I mention it here mainly because I found the length so unusual.

Gretsch's double tom stands are unique in the industry, and I like the philosophy of the design. The stands are merely vertical posts (*T-4838 Tripod Stand Base*) onto which two (and conceivably more) individual tom holders are free to move independently of each other. This is a good system, since it allows drums to be set at widely different heights and angles, if desired. (This is a handy feature for suspending one rack and one "floor" tom on

the same stand, or one high tom over the hi-hat and one in the "standard" rack-tom position.)

The ratchets holding the L-posts feature oversized teeth, providing very secure grip but not allowing for infinite angle adjustment. This may or may not be a problem, depending upon how critical your angle requirements are. The L-posts feature memory locks at both the ratchet end and for the tom brackets.

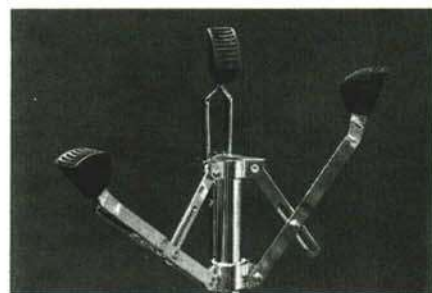


I did find that the stand base itself was too high for some applications. For example, even at the lowest possible settings at all points, I still had to tilt the suspended "floor" tom toward me in order to play it. I normally play that drum flat, but a flat setting here made the drum too high. I've been informed by Gretsch that they are aware of this problem, and may offer a cut-down version of this stand base

specifically for floor tom suspension.

The *T-4987 Short Deluxe Snare Stand* featured a tripod unlike any I've ever seen. The legs do not collapse together as the central ring slides up the center tube. Instead, the central ring is fixed to the tube. Each leg brace is slotted and can slide independently. This makes for very quick setup and breakdown, and allows the stand to go quite low in order to accommodate deep drums even at low height settings. The traditional offset snare basket was adjusted by an oversized threaded clamp, and held the drum very securely.

The *T-4852 cymbal boom* and *T-4854* telescoping boom were both perfectly fine, heavy-duty stands. Their outstanding feature was their stability; no amount of whacking could make them so much as jiggle—even when they held fairly heavy cymbals and were positioned at less-than-optimum angles (in terms of balance).



The bass drum pedal supplied with this kit was Gretsch's famous *Floating Action* model, which has the same design and heritage as the Camco and *DW5000* pedals. Enough has been written about this pedal; it plays great.

Prices

As I stated at the outset, Gretsch's whole concept of sales is that, although they do offer "catalog" kits, they are a custom company offering drumkits tailor-made to the desires of their customers. Consequently, it's really misleading to give comprehensive or "package" prices for Gretsch equipment. And since the kit I tested was from a series specifically designed to offer the most in the way of popular options, it makes the most sense to break the prices down according to the components of the kit. Prices shown are all retail list.

Bass drum (including spurs): \$890.00; 8x14 snare drum: \$475.00; 8x8 tom: \$250.00; 8x10 tom: \$265.00; 10x12 tom: \$280.00; 12x14 tom: \$315.00; 14x16 tom: \$345.00. (Note: All toms fitted with RIMS mounts, ranging from \$19.00 to \$24.50 in additional cost.) Double tom floor stand: \$265.00; snare stand: \$125.00; cymbal stand with boom arm: \$140.00; telescoping cymbal boom: \$150.00; bass drum pedal: \$160.00.



LEGENDS OF TIME

Rikki Rockett & DW Drums

From the maker of DW pedals and hardware.
Drum Workshop, Inc.
 2697 Lavery Ct. #16
 Newbury Park, CA 91320
 (805) 499-6863

SOUND CONTROL



If you have yet to experience the exciting new Sound Control series of cymbals from Sabian, you're bound to have some questions ... so here we go!

Q. Just what are Sound Control cymbals?

A. They're highly responsive ride and crash cymbals featuring a specially formed flanged edge.

Q. Why the flange? ... What does it do?

A. The flange controls the overtone buildup ... resulting in a crystal clear and definite sound ... a controlled sound.

Q. But what is 'controlled sound'?

A. For the ride cymbals ... full tonal response remains, but excessive overtones have been eliminated.
For the crashes ... crisp, cutting and tight sounds ... almost glasslike, with amazingly fast decay.

Q. How do the HH and AA Sound Control cymbals differ?

A. Its low profile and the hand hammering create the warm, rich tonal characteristics of the HH Sound Control.
The AA Sound Control on the other hand is brighter and more cutting.

Q. Then what is a Hi-Bell Sound Control cymbal?

A. Unlike our other hand hammered cymbals, the Hi-Bell has the higher profile of the AA ... resulting in warm, rich tones, but with a drier sound, higher pitch and additional cut. It's a voice between the HH and AA ... very versatile for riding and accenting.

Q. Who can use Sound Control cymbals in their set-up? ... Can I?

A. These unique cymbals were created for the versatile and articulate drummer ... for both live and studio situations. Sound Control is a welcome new voice for any player's set-up ... be it rock, jazz, country, or beyond. Mix them in with your present set-up and you'll be amazed at the difference.

Such respected drummers as Larrie Londin (Journey, Everly Brothers), Jeff Watts (Wynton Marsalis), Richie Hayward (Warren Zevon, Little Feat) and Pat Mastelotto (Mr. Mister) added Sound Control cymbals to their set-ups ... instantly!

Sabian Ltd., Meductic, New Brunswick, Canada E0H 1L0

SABIAN
CYMBAL MAKERS

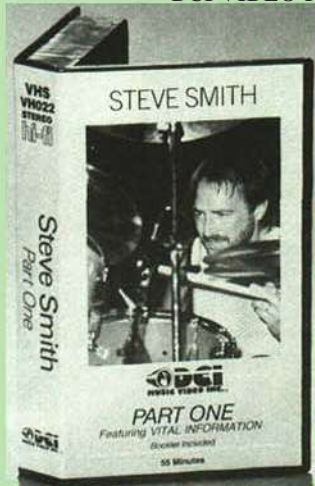
INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

MD TRIVIA CONTEST WINNER

The October 1987 issue of *MD* presented the first in a series of *MD Trivia Contest* questions. The question was: "Name the drummer on the Sly & The Family Stone classic album *Fresh*." As the overwhelming number of people responding knew, the cor-

rect answer is: **Andy Newmark**. *Modern Drummer* and Tama Drums congratulate **Alan W. Stott**, of Anchorage, Alaska. Alan's card was drawn from among those with the correct answer, making him the winner of a Tama *Swinestar* drumkit.

DCI VIDEO RECEIVES AWARD



Steve Smith: Part One, one of several new releases from DCI Music Video, was recently named "Best Instructional Music Video Of 1987" by the American Video Conference. Sponsored by *Billboard* Magazine and the American Film Institute, the awards ceremony was held last fall in Hollywood.

Steve Smith is one of the most highly-acclaimed drummers in music today. His group, Vital Information, is featured in performance segments on the *Part One* video. Steve is now working on the follow-up *Part Two* for release in the spring of 1988.

SABIAN SHOWROOM OPENS IN LONDON

Sabian Cymbals recently opened its new cymbal showroom in London, England, according to Dayne Marshall, Sabian Director of Sales and Promotions for the U.K. The facility is centrally located in the area of Putney Bridge, and is equipped with an abundant stock of all the ranges of cymbals offered by the company. In addition, two drumkits are set up to provide the inter-

ested player with an ideal opportunity to sample the cymbals. The showroom is open to professional and amateur drummers alike, and will also act as a service center for both local and visiting members of the Sabian international endorser program. Showroom visits are by appointment only, and can be arranged through Dayne Marshall at 01-337-5547 (London).

ENDORSER NEWS

Peter Erskine is now endorsing Evans *CAD/CAM* drumheads.... **Danny Seraphine** and **Jim Chapin** have recently joined Drum Workshop's roster of endorsers on both drums and hardware.... Sabian recently announced the addition of many new artists, including **Don Brewer**, **John "Vatos" Hernandez**, **Crystal Taliefero**, **Pat Tomek**, **Mike Kowalski**, **Jorn Anderson**, **Mike Hanson**, **Kenny McDougald**, **"Muzz," Hirotosuga Homma**, **Harry Stinson**, **Vince Leigh**, **Russell Bizzett**, **Arnos Lucas**, **Billy Ward**, **Larry Zack**, and **Dani Blaze**.... **Barcus-Berry** has announced the addition of up-and-coming drummers **Adam Bennett**, **Gonzo**, and **Chris Frazier** to its ranks of drum-trigger

users.... **U2's Larry Mullen, Jr.** has become an official Yamaha drum endorser.... **Pro-Mark** has added **Ricky Van Shelton** to its roster.... New Paiste artists include **Charlie Quintana**, **Scott Rockenfield**, **Dave Lombardo**, **Michael Licata**, **Joey Scott**, **Robert Sweet**, **Michael Jochum**, **Pete Escovedo**, and **Paul Leim**.... From Purecussion, Inc., comes a list of artists currently endorsing RIMS mounts that includes **Michael Blair**, **Simeon Cain**, **Dennis Chambers**, **Victor DiLorenzo**, **Steve Ferrone**, **Grant Hart**, **Cliff Martinez**, **Alan Childs**, **Fran Christina**, **William Stewart**, **John Dittrich**, **Frankie Banali**, **Rob Siebenberg**, **Nick Mason**, and **Boris Williams**.

L.A. MUSIC EXPO CONSUMER TRADE SHOW

Music Expo '88, designed to be the world's largest showcase for music and music-related products, will be held at the Long Beach Convention Center complex between April 29 and May 1, 1988. The venue is located just south of Los Angeles, California, and was selected because the greater L.A. area provides the greatest concentration of professional and amateur musicians in the world.

The Expo will host over 200 manufacturer and vendor exhibits in a trade show format structured for consumers. In addition, a variety of product seminars, demonstrations, live performances, sweepstakes, and individual product promotions will take place. For further information, contact The Group Public Relations, 723 1/2 N. La Cienega Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90069, or call (213) 657-2211.

DRUMSET WORKSHOP

The Conservatory of Music at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio is once again offering its Summer Drumset Workshop, June 13-17, 1988. The program is designed to benefit intermediate and advanced musicians (minimum age: 15) and to provide a concentrated course of study covering virtually all areas of drumset performance. Faculty includes **Ed Soph**, **Steve Houghton**, **Guy Remonko**, and **Bob Breithaupt**.

The workshop schedule will include private and group lessons with an artist/teacher (limited to

first 36 registrants), clinic sessions, daily listening, videotaped performances, individual practice time, performance opportunities, and classes in theory and history of drumset drumming. Additional areas of study are also offered. A \$50.00 deposit is required with the application form and must be received by May 20, 1988. For complete fee, program, and all other information, contact **Bob Breithaupt**, Capital University Percussion Department, 2199 East Main Street, Columbus, Ohio 43209, (614) 236-6234.

DRUMMERS INCORPORATED MEMBERS POLL

Drummers Incorporated, Britain's leading society for drummers, held its first-ever Members Poll early last fall. This will be an annual event in the future. **Tony Bingham**, director of the society, reported the following results: Best Jazz Drummer, **Buddy Rich**; Best Rock Drummer, **Carl Palmer**; Best Session Drummer, **Simon Phillips**; Best Ail-Around Drummer, **Steve Gadd**; Best Up-

And-Coming Drummer, **Steve White**; Best Drum Tutor, **Art Of The Drummer**, **John Savage**; Best Drum Clinician, **Lloyd Ryan**; Best Electronic Kit, **Simmons**; Best Drumkit Available, **Yamaha 9000 Series**; Best Drum Manufacturer, **Yamaha**; Best Drumhead Manufacturer, **Remo**; Best Cymbal Manufacturer, **Zildjian**; Best Magazine For Drummers Available, *Modern Drummer*.

NEW FACILITY FOR PRO-MARK



The Pro-Mark drumstick company began construction last winter on a new, larger facility, located directly across the street from the existing building. The new address will be 10707 Craighead Drive, Houston, Texas

77025. As we went to press, completion and move-in was projected to take place in mid-March.

Pro-Mark Vice President **Maury Brochstein** stated, "The property is in excess of 56,000 square feet, and our initial building will contain over 14,000 square feet. This new facility will be much more functional and productive than our present location. Future expansion has already been drawn into the building plans." President **Herb Brochstein** added, "We have great confidence in the nation's economy, in the music industry, and in Pro-Mark. This is a fantastic way to begin our 31st year in business."

Jimmy Maelen Benefit

Photos by Ebet Roberts

Bryan Ferry, Kool & The Gang, and Patty Smyth are some of the artists who performed at the Ritz in New York City this past December 6, in a benefit for percussionist Jimmy Maelen, who is suffering from leukemia. The concert, sponsored by The Jimmy Maelen Fund Committee and promoter John Scher, also included performances by Southside Johnny, David Sanborn, B.J. Thomas, The System, Paul Shaffer's "The World's Most Dangerous Band," and Garland Jeffreys.

Considered the premier New York session percussionist by many in the music business, Maelen's recent contributions include work with Dire Straits, Roxy Music, James Taylor, and Peter Gabriel. Contributions to help pay for Jimmy's medical expenses can be sent to The Jimmy Maelen Fund, c/o Pastor Zimmer, Northern Valley Evangelical Church, 12th Street and Stivers, Creskill, NJ 07626.



Drummers Anton Fig, Allan Schwartzberg, and Andy Newmark.



Percussionist Sammy Figueroa and drummer Chris Parker.



Patty Smyth performing with Paul Shaffer, Will Lee, and Sid McGinnis.



David Sanborn and Hiram Bullock with The World's Most Dangerous Band.



The Bryan Ferry Band.



Southside Johnny.



As we went to press we learned that Jimmy Maelen passed away on January 15th. Donations, however, should still be sent to help pay for the Maelen family's medical expenses.

PRO-MARK STICK-RAPP TAPE



Pro-Mark has recently introduced *Stick-Rapp*, a new innovation in stick gripping tape. This new material is easy to apply and provides a soft, comfortable, non-slip grip. The tape is washable and reusable, so that if a stick is broken or worn out, the tape can be removed and used again. Each package contains enough tape for

four sticks, pre-cut to fit perfectly. The product is available in pink, yellow, blue, green, and black, and is available through Pro-Mark dealers world-wide. For more information, write Pro-Mark, 10706 Craighead Drive, Houston, Texas 77025, or call (713)666-2525.

DRUM RELEASES FROM ALFRED PUBLISHING

Alfred Publishing is currently offering two educational works of interest to drummers. A *Funky Thesaurus—For The Rock Drummer*, by Charles Dowd, has been revised with a new cover and title and expanded to a convenient 9"x12" size. A follow-up to Dowd's *Funky Primer*, this work features Afro-Cuban rhythms and odd-meter rock beats.

Alfred's Drum Method, Book 1

(Video Tape) is a video instruction tape that correlates to the printed version of *Alfred's Drum Method, Book 1*, by Sandy Feinstein and Dave Black. Examples are performed by the authors, and the snare drum solos are performed by Jay Wanamaker. Contact Alfred Publishing, 16380 Roscoe Boulevard, P.O. Box 10003, Van Nuys, California 91410-0003 for further information.

NEW DYNACORD PRODUCTS

Dynacord recently announced the introduction of two new powered mixers for use with acoustic or electronic drums. The *PS-600* is a 300-watt, six-channel mixer designed in a 19" rack-mount format. The unit features built-in 16-bit digital stereo reverb with 16 preset programs (by Alesis). The *PS-800* is a console-design mixer that offers 400 watts of power, 6-band stereo graphic EQ, and the same 16-bit, 16-preset digital stereo reverb.

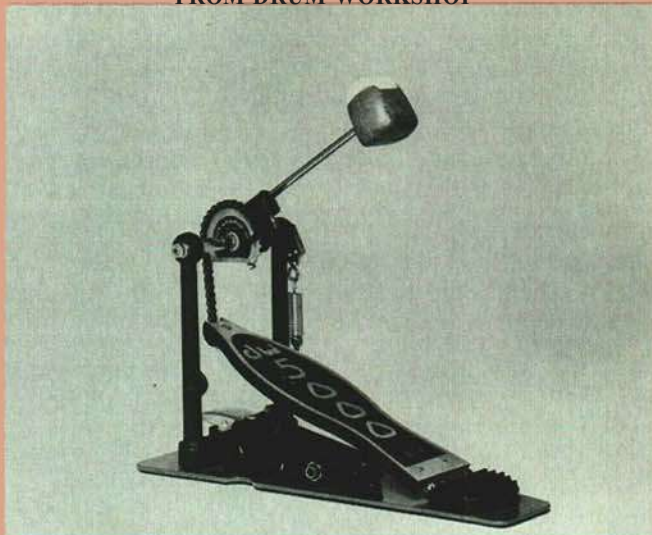
Dynacord is also offering the *FE-10M* Mini-Monitor. An ultra-compact monitor speaker unit, the *FE-10M* is equipped with a 10" woofer and a high-frequency tweeter, and is specifically designed to provide full-range sound reproduction in the smallest space possible (thus making it ideal for use in and around drumkits where space is at a premium). Contact your Dynacord dealer for further information.

SABIAN CATALOG/POSTER OFFER



Sabian recently announced the simultaneous release of its new 16-page full-color catalog and latest "All Star" poster featuring Steve Ferrone, Larrie Londin, Phil Collins, and seven other great drummers. These items are available as a package by sending \$3.00 (for postage and handling) along with your name and address (please print) to Sabian Ltd., Meductic, New Brunswick, Canada, EOH 1LO.

NEW ACOUSTIC AND ELECTRONIC PEDALS FROM DRUM WORKSHOP



Drum Workshop introduced several new pedals at this year's winter NAMM show. Additions to the DW hardware line included the 5002 *DC*, a specially priced version of the original *DW5002* Double Bass Drum Pedal with double universal joints; the 5000 *Turbo E*, a new acoustic/electronic hybrid pedal that utilizes a unique electro-magnetic triggering sensor in conjunction with a standard 5000 *Turbo* acoustic bass drum pedal; and the *EP-F*, a foot-activated mechanism that can be used to trigger electronic sounds in situations where the feel and response of a traditional bass drum pedal is not required.

DW also announced recently that the company is now covering

many of the castings and parts on its 5000 Series pedals with a five-year limited warranty. According to DW president Don Lombardi, "We want to make the drumming public aware that the differences between DW's American-made pedals and other manufacturers' imported pedals are more than just price and appearance. With a five-year guarantee, we're backing up our claim that the quality of our materials and workmanship far exceeds that of any other bass drum pedal on the market." For details on specific warranted parts, or for information on any DW product, contact Drum Workshop, 2697 Lavery Court, #16, Newbury Park, California 91320, or call (805) 499-6863.

AKAI PEQ6 PROGRAMMABLE EQUALIZER



Akai's *PEQ6* is a single-rack-space-sized unit that contains six separate equalizers, each modified by seven band controls, and each independently programmable. In addition, the *PEQ6* offers 32 banks of memory, each of which can store all the settings of all six EQ banks. The programs can be switched via MIDI program change commands, via the Program Up footswitch jack, or

directly via the front panel switches. Used as a drumset equalizer, the *PEQ6* can add various equalization settings that have previously only been available with electronic drums, allowing the acoustic drummer to fit into all musical styles. For more information, contact Akai Professional, P.O. Box 2344, Fort Worth, Texas 76113, or call (817) 336-5114.

A SNARE DRUM SHOULD ADD COLOR

That's why we created the AW646. Drawing upon classic design principles of the past and marrying them with several new concepts of our own has enabled us to create a modern masterpiece.

We started with a one piece Canadian hard rock maple shell, precision carved to a 3.5 mm thickness for maximum sensitivity... then designed an entirely new, low mass tensioning system which allows independent or simultaneous top and bottom head tuning from the batter side of the drum.

We combined these features with our newest cam lever strainer, our finest quality die cast hoops and brass wire snares to produce an incredible sounding snare drum, capable of reflecting every nuance of your playing.

Experience the color of the AW646 at your authorized Tama Dealer.



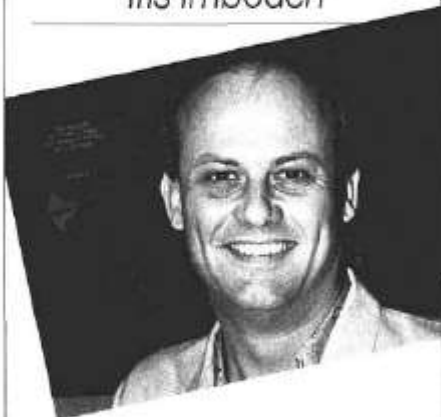
The AW646 is also available in a 5" depth as well (AW645) and comes finished in Amber.

TAMA

For a full color catalog send \$2.00 (\$3.00 in Canada) to: Tama, Dept. MDD2 • P.O. Box 886, Bensalem, PA 19020 • 3221 Producer Way, Pomona, CA 91768-3916 • P.O. Box 2009, Idaho Falls, ID 83403 • In Canada, 6969 Trans Canada Highway, Suite 105, St. Laurent, Quebec, Canada H4T1V8.

Profiles in Percussion

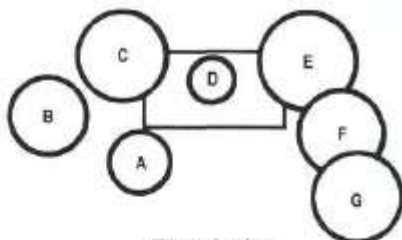
Tris Imboden



Tris Imboden is truly a veteran of the L.A. music scene. Since 1970, Tris has appeared on record and on stage with such diverse artists as Chaka Khan, Burt Bacharach, David Foster, Howard Hewitt, Neil Diamond and Brian Wilson.

In 1977, Kenny Loggins chose Tris to fill his drum chair, where he stayed for over 9 years. Tris is currently on the road and in the studio with Al Jarreau.

When we asked Tris about his Zildjians he just smiled and replied, "There is no other cymbal to my mind, and it's been that way since I was ten years old."



Tris Imboden
cymbal set-up.

- A: 13" Z Dyno Beat Hi Hats
- B: 16" A Medium Thin Crash Brilliant
- C: 18" A Medium Thin Crash Brilliant
- D: 10" EFX #1
- E: 20" A Ping Ride Brilliant
- F: 17" A Medium Thin Crash Brilliant
- G: 18" A China Boy High Brilliant

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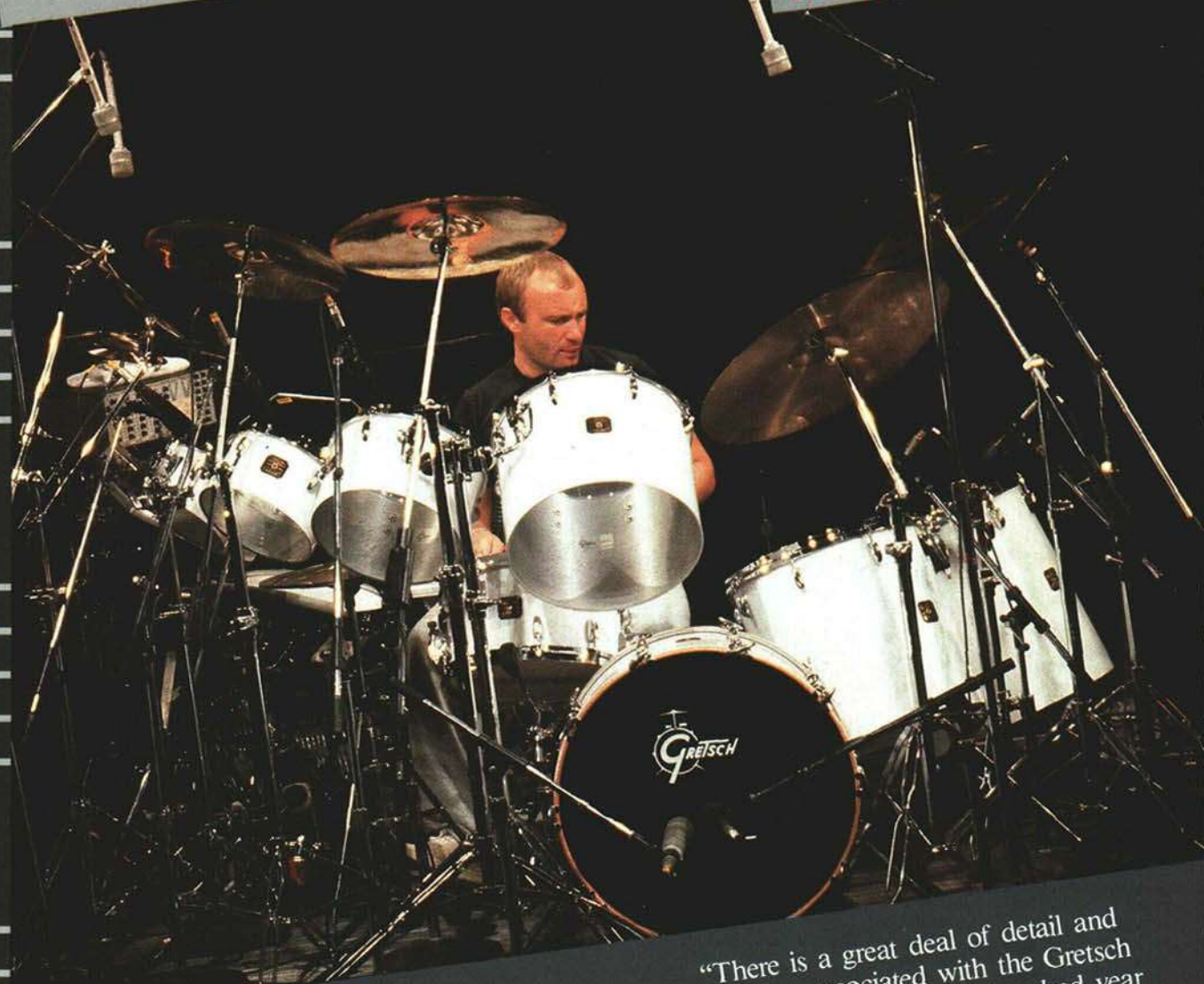
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Why do I play Gretsch?

Phil Collins
Genesis, producer & solo artist



"When I was about fourteen or fifteen years old, a good friend of mine who played drums in Joe Cocker's grease-band was playing Gretsch. I persuaded him to sell me his kit. From that moment, I was a Gretsch player. I still own that kit and it still sounds great today."

"Gretsch has always been 'a drummer's drum' and when the opportunity developed allowing me to play Gretsch again, I jumped at the chance."

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